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Inside Congress

SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

Foreword by

SHRI DESHBANDHU GUPTA,

M. L. A. (Central)

Member, Constituent Assembly

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For twenty years I have nursed the idea of presenting to the public in the durable form of a book all the articles written by Swami Shraddhanand on Congress and published in the Liberator *during the year 1926. It was my privilege to be the Joint Editor of the said weekly which was founded and edited by Swamiji. I considered this publication to be the least tribute I could pay to him. But as the adage has it, 'if wishes were horses, beggars would ride'. The greatness of Swamiji has converted wishes into horses, and, beggar as I am, has enabled me to ride.*

I am deeply indebted to Shri Deshbandhu Gupta, M.L.A. (Central) and a Member of the Constituent Assembly for the Foreword which he has contributed. I am also thankful to Pandit Indra, Swamiji's son, for the good wishes he has extended to this publication.

My only request to the numerous followers and admirers all over the country, especially in North India, is that they should be kind enough to extend their support to this literary memorial of Swamiji.

P. R. Lele

Tarabag, Bombay 4, Dec. 1946.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD	1
PANDIT JAWAHARLAL ON SWAMIJI ..	3
STORE OF SELF-ABNEGATION	4
SWAMIJI AS I KNEW HIM	5
THE MILITANT MONK	9
PRESIDENTS OF THE CONGRESS	13
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS	17
LAHORE SESSION	21
LUCKNOW SESSION (1899)	29
BAL-PAL-LAL	34
STONES FOR BREAD	43
DHARMIK YUDDHA	50
REAL SATYAGRAHA SPIRIT	61
ENTRY INTO JAME MASJID	68
BARRON SAVES SITUATION	76
SAD DEVELOPMENT	83
RESIGNATION	90
VENUE OF CONGRESS	98
ACTUALLY IN THE CONGRESS	105
AMRITSAR TO CALCUTTA	114
AT CALCUTTA	119
NEO MAULANA	124
PROBLEM OF UNTOUCHABILITY	131
BONFIRE OF FOREIGN CLOTH	139
DELHI MARTYRS' MEMORIAL	145
THE FIRST DICTATOR	152
THE FATE OF MEMORIAL COLLECTION ..	158
THE A. I. C. C. AT DELHI	165
MAHATMAJI JAILED	171
REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY	179
CONGRESS ENQUIRY COMMITTEE	189
AT THE GURUKULA	199
ONE OF OUR HEROES	206

FOREWORD

DURING the last year of his life Swami Shraddhanandji conducted an English weekly called "*The Liberator.*" Swamiji was an uncompromising enemy of untouchability, and the problem of untouchability was acutest in Madras Presidency. He wanted to reach the hearts of the people of that Province through the *Liberator* and, therefore, he conducted it in English. He wrote a signed article under the heading 'Confession of my Articles of Faith' in the very first issue of the *Liberator,* which came out on 1st April 1926. Therein he observed :

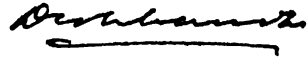
"In my wanderings through the Madras Presidency during the last two years I found that if I wanted to reach the heart and the intellect of the Andhras, the Tamilians, the Malayalese and the Canarese, I must utilise the English language as a vehicle of my thoughts and ideas."

In the columns of the *Liberator* he published a series of Articles on the 'Indian National Congress.' It consisted of twenty-six articles, the first of which was published on 1st April and the last on 28th Oct. 1926. Within two months thereafter he met a martyr's death. The 23rd of Dec. 1946 will be the twentieth anniversary of Swamiji's death.

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary is being published in his sacred memory a book containing all those articles. Mr. P. R. Lele of Bombay undertook to compile the said articles and organise the publication as

his homage to the revered Swamiji. Mr. Lele had the privilege of being the Joint Editor of the *Liberator* with Swamiji, and therefore, is the most appropriate person for this piece of work.

When he asked me to contribute a Foreword, I could not refuse. But let me not be accused of presuming to write a Foreword to Swamiji's writings. I was his humble pupil and lieutenant. My duty is to revere, and follow in the footsteps of, Swamiji. Whether these words deserve the name 'Foreword' I am not sure—I am writing them only to associate myself with the endeavour of co-workers to pay an humble homage to our departed Leader. I am glad that twenty years after Swamiji left this world, some of his writings are being placed before his numerous admirers and worshippers in a much more durable form than a weekly publication. I commend this book to all those who esteem the late Swamiji, his name, his sterling sincerity, and his mission.



DESHBANDHU GUPTA

5, Keeling Rd., New Delhi, 27 Nov. 1946

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL ON SWAMIJI

THE end of that year 1926 was darkened by a great tragedy, which sent a thrill of horror all over India. It showed to what depths communal passion could reduce our people. Swami Shraddhanand was assassinated by a fanatic as he lay in bed. What a death for a man who had bared his chest to the bayonets of the Gurkhas and marched to meet their fire! Nearly eight years earlier he, an Arya Samajist leader, had stood in the pulpit of the great Jame Masjid of Delhi and preached to a mighty gathering of Muslims and Hindus of unity and India's freedom. And that great multitude had greeted him with loud cries of *Hindu-Musalman-ki-jai*, and outside in the streets they had jointly sealed that cry with their blood. And now he lay dead, killed by a fellow-countryman, who thought, no doubt, that he was doing a meritorious deed, which would lead him to paradise.

Always I have admired sheer physical courage, the courage to face physical suffering in a good cause, even unto death. Most of us, I suppose, admire it. Swami Shraddhanand had an amazing amount of that fearlessness. His tall and stately figure, wrapped in a sanyasin's robe, perfectly erect in spite of advanced years, eyes flashing, sometimes a shadow of irritation or anger at the weakness of others passing over his face—how I remember that vivid picture, and how often it has come back to me!

—*Jawaharlal's Autobiography*

STORE OF SELF-ABNEGATION

LALA Munshi Ram has been a daring worker from the start. His work has always been such as to give him a leading place. He has those qualities which attract people. He is outspoken. He is a good host. Himself outspoken and truthful, he does not suspect anybody else to be speaking an untruth and is extremely trustful. Firm in his conviction, he has great perseverance. During the year 1892-93 and several years following I held that Munshi Ramji was accustomed to set people quarrelling and hankered after limelight and leadership. I have altogether changed that view and hold it wrong to judge him only by what he did as a partisan or for the good of his party. He has his faults as every other great man has. I have thoroughly revised the opinion I formed when partisanship raged high and sincerely regret my earlier opinion. Munshi Ramji has an emotional character. He is generous and hospitable. His spirit of service is of a very high order. He is not the man to mind loss or suffering for his faith. He is a store of self-abnegation. He deserves friendship and always stands by his friends.

—*Autobiography of Lala Lajpat Rai*

SWAMIJI AS I KNEW HIM

By M. K. GANDHI

THE expected has happened. Swami Shraddhanandji passed a day or two at the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati, now about six months ago, and told me, in the course of his conversations that he often received letters threatening his life. Where is the reformer who has not a price put upon his head?

Swamiji was a reformer, he was a man of action not of words. His was a living belief. He had suffered for it. He was bravery personified. He never quailed before danger. He was a warrior. And a warrior loves to die, not on a sick-bed, but on the battlefield.

God had willed for him a martyr's death and so, though he was still on the sick-bed, he died at the hands of an assassin. In the language of the Gita, therefore, 'happy the warrior who achieves such a blessed death.'

Death is at any time blessed, but it is twice blessed for a warrior who dies for his cause, i.e. truth. Death is no fiend, he is the truest of friends. He delivers us from agony. He helps us against ourselves. He ever gives us new chances, new hopes. He is like sleep a sweet restorer. Yet it is customary to mourn when a friend dies. The custom has no operation when the death is that of a martyr. I cannot, therefore, mourn over his death. He and his are to be envied. For though Shraddhanandji is dead, he is yet living. He is living

in a truer sense than when he moved about in our midst in his giant body. The family in which he was born, the nation to which he belonged are to be congratulated upon so glorious a death as this. He lived a hero. He has died a hero.

Young India—December 30, 1926

MY first acquaintance with Swamiji was when he was Mahatma Munshi Ram and that by letter. He was then Governor of Kangdi Gurukul, his great original contribution to education. He was not satisfied with the orthodox Western method. He wanted his boys to be saturated with Vedic teaching, and he taught through Hindi, not English. He wanted them to be and remain brahmacharis during their training. He had inspired his boys to contribute to the fund that was then being collected for the Satyagrahis of South Africa. And he wanted them to do so by themselves labouring as coolies for hire ; for was it not a coolies' fight in South Africa ? The boys rose to the occasion, earned full wages and sent them to me. The letter he wrote to me about this incident was written in Hindi. I was addressed as ' my dear brother '. It endeared me to Mahatma Munshi Ram ; we had never met each other before.

Andrews was the link between us. He was anxious that whenever I returned home, I should make the acquaintance of what I used to call his trinity—the Poet, Principal Rudra and Mahatma Munshi Ram.

From the time of the receipt of that letter, we became brothers in arms. We met each other in 1915 at the favourite Gurukul and with each meeting we came closer and knew each other better. His love of ancient India, Sanskrit and Hindi was remarkable. *He was undoubtedly a non-cooperator before non-cooperation was born.* He was impatient to gain Swaraj. He hated untouchability and was anxious to raise the status of the 'untouchables'. He could not brook any restriction upon their freedom.

When the Rowlatt agitation was started, he was among the very first to hail it. He wrote a very warm letter to me. But the suspension of Satyagraha after the Amritsar and Viramgam tragedies he could not understand. From that period our differences commenced but they never once disturbed the brotherly relations that subsisted between us. The difference showed to me his childlike nature. He blurted out the truth as he knew it without regard to consequences. He was daring to a fault. I observed more and more the temperamental differences between us as time progressed but they only proved to me the goodness of the soul in him. To think audibly is no crime, it is a virtue. It is the hall-mark of truth. Swamiji thought audibly.

The Bardoli decision broke his heart. He despaired of me. His open protest was most energetic. His private letters to me were still more so but with the emphasis on the differences there was an equal emphasis on love. He was not satisfied with an avowal of love in mere letters. He sought me out as opportunity offered and explained his own position, tried to understand mine.

But the real reason, as it seems to me, for seeking me out was to assure me, as if any such assurance was necessary, of undiminished love for me as for a younger brother.

I cannot close the reminiscences of the life of a great reformer without recalling his last visit to the Satyagraha Ashram only a few months ago. *Let me assure my Musalman friends that he was no hater of Musalmans.* He undoubtedly distrusted many Musalmans. But he bore them no ill-will. He thought that Hindus were cowed down and he wanted them to be brave and be able to defend themselves and their honour. In this connection he told me that he was much misunderstood and that he was absolutely innocent of many things that were said against him. He told me he had several threatening letters. He was warned by friends not to travel alone. But this man of faith said, "What protection shall I seek but of God? Not a blade of grass perishes without His will. I know therefore that nothing can happen to me so long He wishes me to serve through this body."

During this stay of his he spoke to the boys and girls of the Ashram school. He said the best protection of Hinduism must come from within, from self-purification. He put the greatest emphasis on the need of Brahmacharya for the building of character and body.

Young India—January 6, 1927

V. Vial

THE MILITANT MONK

By P. R. LELE

SWAMI Shraddhanand, who expired on 23rd December 1926, was called the militant monk, more because of his magnificent physique than any offensive quality of mind. He was one of those few public men who improve on close acquaintance. He was a man of action and, therefore, rather intolerant of the politician's methods of endless discussion and glorious inaction. He was aggressive in the sense that he did not shirk fight. When there was a responsible job to do he would not hesitate to take a plunge and would go forward irrespective of difficulties and without thought as to how many accompanied or followed him. Then he would not care for criticism or ridicule. His earlier title itself—he was known as Mahatma Munshi Ram—embodied ridicule more than anything else. Because he stood for the original Vedic culture and founded a Gurukula without State recognition, he was damned as a visionary and, therefore, dubbed a Mahatma. But he went forward with singleminded devotion to the objective and in course of time received recognition from the highest in the land. An article by the late Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Prime Minister of England, which is published at the end of the book, is testimony of the high esteem in which the work of Mahatma Munshi Ram, as he then was, came to be held in due course. Mahatma Gandhi paid the highest

possible compliment to the Gurukula by sending his son to that institution.

He was born in the same twelve-month with President Wilson of America, Lord Haldane of England who was reputed to be the only person who understood Einstein's 'Relativity', Bernard Shaw of Ireland and England, and Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Like all of them Swami Shraddhanand was essentially interested in education and spiritual values. His earliest name itself is identified with lore. He was christened as Brihaspati—which was the name of the preceptor of Gods. His second name—Munshi Ram—also means a teacher. And the name he chose at the age of sixty showed that he was a man of faith—Shraddhanand. He was essentially a seer because he saw ahead of himself and made his contribution to the shaping of the future.

Swami Shraddhanand went through all the stages prescribed by the Vedic doctrine. He was a Brahmachari, a Grihastha (man of the world), a Vanaprastha and then a Sanyasi. He founded the first Gurukula at Hardwar in March 1902 and gave not only all his belongings worth about forty thousand rupees but also his sons thereto. He served the Gurukula without respite till he became a Sanyasi during the year 1917. He made a complete success of the Gurukula before he technically took up other duties. His sanyasa meant only a change of duties, because he was free to serve the whole world. He expressed his mission in his address as Chairman of the Reception Committee to be 'service of the mankind' irrespective of creed or clime.

He was the most uncompromising champion of the

untouchables. It was a year before Mahatma Gandhi incorporated the removal of untouchability in the Congress programme that Swami Shraddhanand advocated the cause of the submerged fifth. Speaking from the Congress platform as Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Amritsar Session, Swamiji said :

> "The Nation lacks one thing. What is that? General Booth Tucker of the Salvation Army stated before the Reform Scheme Committee that the five and a half crores of untouchables in India should be given special concessions because they were the sheetanchors of the British Government. I would ask you to reflect and find out how five and a half crores of untouchables could be the sheetanchors of Government. I would also request you to take a vow, while you are within this sacred pandal, to so behave towards these so-called untouchables that their children may read in schools and colleges which your children attend, that they may be allowed to mix with your families as your families do amongst themselves and that they may be allowed to put their shoulders along with your own to the wheel of political activity and advancement. Ladies and gentlemen, pray with me that this dream of mine may be realised."

Shraddhanandji was not a politician. He joined the satyagraha against the Rowlatt Acts because he thought they were an outrage against fundamental human rights. It was under the sheer weight of circumstances that he became the Chairman of the Reception Committee at Amritsar and, consequently, had to take

active part in Congress affairs for some years. He went in with the desire and hope to spiritualise politics. He remained in the hope that he would be able more successfully to fight for the uplift of the untouchables from within the Congress. When he found that his efforts were not supported, he got out of active leadership of the Congress. Then he started working on his own and founded the Dalitoddhar Sabha.

This is not the place to attempt an estimate of the work and greatness of Swami Shraddhanand. The tributes paid to him by Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal and Lala Lajpat Rai, which are published in this book, will give some idea. A libel was and has been sedulously propagated against him, that he was hostile to Muslims. I do wish to give the lie direct to that libel. He admired and loved Musalmans. He only asked Hindus to improve their social system so that Hindus should not fall before the proselytising tactics of Musalmans. If today the Hindus stand in Punjab where they do and dominate the combination in the Punjab Legislature which has formed the present ministry, the credit should frankly be given to the Arya Samaj, of which Swami Shraddhanand was a leading light. Be it noted that the Congress Party in the Punjab Legislative Assembly is overwhelmingly manned by Hindus.

N. V. Virkar

Pandit Motilal Nehru

President, Amritsar Session of the Congress, 1919

PRESIDENTS OF THE CONGRESS

Year	*Place*	*President*
1885	Bombay	W. C. Bonnerjee
1886	Calcutta	Dadabhoy Naoroji
1887	Madras	Budruddin Tyebji
1888	Allahabad	George Yule
1889	Bombay	Sir William Wedderburn
1890	Calcutta	Sir Pherozeshah Mehta
1891	Nagpur	P. Ananda Charlu
1892	Allahabad	W. C. Bonnerjee
1893	Lahore	Dadabhoy Naoroji
1894	Madras	Alfred Webb
1895	Poona	Surendranath Bannerjea
1896	Calcutta	Rahimtulah Sayani
1897	Amraoti	Sir Sankaran Nair
1898	Madras	Anand Mohan Ghose
1899	Lucknow	Romesh Chander Dutt
1900	Lahore	Sir Narayan Chandavarkar
1901	Calcutta	D. E. Vachha
1902	Ahmedabad	Surendranath Bannerjea
1903	Madras	Lal Mohan Ghosh
1904	Bombay	Sir Henry Cotton
1905	Benares	Gopal Krishna Gokhale
1906	Calcutta	Dadabhoy Naoroji
1907	Surat	Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh
1908	Madras	Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh
1909	Lahore	Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya
1910	Allahabad	Sir William Wedderburn
1911	Calcutta	Bishan Narayan Dhar
1912	Bankipore	R. N. Mudholkar
1913	Karachi	Nawab Syed Mahmud Bahadur
1914	Madras	Bhupendra Nath Basu
1915	Bombay	S. P. Sinha (later Lord Sinha)

Year	*Place*	*President*
1916	Lucknow	Ambica Charan Mazmudar
1917	Calcutta	Mrs. Annie Besant
1918 (Special)	Bombay	Hasan Imam
1918 (Annual)	Delhi	Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya
1919	Amritsar	Pandit Motilal Nehru
1920 (Special)	Calcutta	Lala Lajpat Rai
1920 (Annual)	Nagpur	C. Vijayaraghavachariar
1921	Ahmedabad	Hakim Ajmal Khan
1922	Gaya	C. R. Das
1923 (Special)	Delhi	Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
1923 (Annual)	Cocanada	Maulana Mahomed Ali
1924	Belgaum	Mahatma Gandhi
1925	Cawnpore	Devi Sarojini Naidu
1926	Gauhati	S. Srinivasa Iyengar
1927	Madras	Dr. M. A. Ansari
1928	Calcutta	Pandit Motilal Nehru
1929	Lahore	Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
1931	Karachi	Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
1934	Bombay	Babu Rajendra Prasad
1936 (March)	Lucknow	Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
1936 (Dec.)	Faizpur	Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
1938	Haripura	Subhash Chandra Bose
1939	Tripuri	Subhash Chandra Bose
1940	Ramgarh	Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
1946	Meerut	J. B. Kripalani

INSIDE CONGRESS

I

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

LONG before the first Congress met in the name of the Indian nation, and a few oligarchs passed certain resolutions in the drawing room in Bombay, I was a regular student of the *Pioneer* and the Lahore *Tribune*. I knew as much about the political movements in the country as a citizen was expected to know.

The first time that I heard of the proposal to start a national political society was, probably, in September 1885, A.D., when Mr. Allan O'Hume made a tour through India for inducing educated Indians to join the new movement. Mr. Hume brought out a pamphlet with the title—"Star in the East"—and went round distributing it and interviewing prominent Indians with a view to enlisting their sympathy for the new movement. I was, then, in Lahore attending lectures for my final examination in law and had become a member of the Aryasamaj. Mr. Hume found that he was not trusted by the Indian gentlemen there. Some put him off with the excuse that they had no leisure, others promised to think over the matter. If any one of them was taken unawares and promised to join the movement, he was sure to send an apologetic letter the next day with some pretext to back out of his promise.

Mr. Hume was much put out at his failure to secure the sympathy of the Punjabis. Full of energy, he set

up an inquiry and found that the mischief was done by an Aryasamajist M.A. who held a respectable post under the British Government. Failing to obtain materials for exposing the gentleman publicly, the impulsive Mr. Hume wrote to the President of the Lahore Aryasamaj, protesting against an atheist "being treated as a member of the Samaj founded by his revered friend the late Pandit Dayanand Saraswati Swami."

After that a few intellectuals from all parts of the country met under the presidentship of the late Mr. W. C. Bonnerji and laid the foundation of a patriotic oligarchy under the title of "the Indian National Congress." I followed the proceedings of the Congress—as it was called—and its activities with great attention.

In 1888 A.D. I came in somewhat close contact with the national movement. The session of the Congress was to be held in the last week of December 1888 at Allahabad. Sir Auckland Colvin was Lieutenant Governor of the United Provinces, of which Allahabad was the capital. Sir A. Colvin issued a secret circular prohibiting Government servants from joining the Congress and placed other obstacles in its way. Mr. Hume wrote a stringent letter of protest putting straight, inconvenient questions to the Governor who wrote a strong reply and sent it to the press.

No sooner was the Lieutenant Governor's printed reply received by Mr. Hume at Simla than a counter-reply was prepared within twelve hours which appeared in pamphlet form covering some eighty printed pages. It was a crushing rejoinder and roused the Indian community to a sense of their duty. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's anti-Congress Muslim (miscalled Patriotic) League had

already come into existence and was strengthening the hands of the bureaucracy in their divide and rule policy.

Both the Congress and the anti-Congress propaganda were pushed on in the Punjab. Kali Babu, then sub-editor of the Lahore *Tribune*, was deputed to establish a Congress Committee at Jalandhar City where I was practising as a Pleader. Kali Babu was a friend of mine and an Aryasamajist. I called to my aid my relation and friend Lala Balak Ram. He was a Municipal Councillor and an Honorary Magistrate. His influence over Musalmans was great. A meeting was called at a private residence. Orthodox Hindus and Musalmans joined in large numbers and almost all the Raises were present. The resolution of sympathy with the objects of the Indian National Congress was moved by Khan Bahadur Fazal-i-Karim Khan, Vice-President of the Municipality, seconded by Lala Harbhaj Rai, President, Local Hindusabha, who was also an Honorary Magistrate and was supported by almost all the titled people present.

This took place on 24th May (Queen Victoria's birthday) and on 31st of the same month a leading article in the *Tribune* gave a vivid description of the triumph of the Congress party. This triumph was only shortlived. Sir Syed's Anti-Congress Propaganda was openly begun by a young Musalman Pleader and one by one, almost all the Musalman supporters of the Congress went over to the Anti-Congress league. But there was a real accession to the Congress Camp in the persons of Kwaja Shah Muhammad Pleader and Pirdad Khan Saheb Mukhtar, who remained Congressmen as long as I was at Jalandhar.

In order to bring Musalmans back to the Congress

fold the central body of the Congress engaged Mr. Ali Muhammad Bhimji of Bombay who toured throughout the Punjab during September, but the Muhammadan opposition was very strong and except Sheikh Umar Baksh M.A., Pleader of Hoshiarpur, I do not remember any prominent Musalman having openly come forward to espouse the Congress cause. Like his two brother lawyers of Jalandhar, Sheikh Umar Baksh also remained devoted to the Congress cause.

At Jalandhar Hindu lawyers joined in large numbers and a local Congress Committee was formed. I was appointed Secretary and in the very next meeting of the Executive Committee I placed a programme of intensive propaganda work for the towns and villages of the district before it and asked for volunteers to go round educating the masses and finding out their grievances. My colleagues wholeheartedly laughed.—"It is a political propaganda. It is no need calling any more meetings. When the time comes, we will elect delegates for the Allahabad Congress in a public meeting. It is not the Aryasamaj, Mahashayaji ! where members are required to sacrifice their worldly interests for mere sentiment." I was disgusted and resigned from the Secretary's office. I was so absorbed in the discharge of my duties as President of the Jalandhar Aryasamaj that when the time for going to attend the Congress came, I was engaged in making the anniversary meeting of the Jalandhar Aryasamaj completely successful.

II

LAHORE SESSION

It was in the beginning of the year 1893 that the 9th Annual session of the Indian National Congress was invited for the first time on behalf of the Punjab. Lahore, the capital city of the Punjab, was to be the host of the Indian patriots. Sardar Dayal Singh Majithia, the well-known public spirited premier nobleman, agreed to act as Chairman of the Reception Committee, because the leading Indian lawyer, (the late Rai Bahadur Sir Pratool Chandra Chatterji) had resigned on account of his being raised to the Punjab Chief Court bench. The late Bakshi Jaishi Ram, Vakil, was appointed acting Secretary. Bakshiji being a special friend asked me to help him in popularizing the idea of the Congress. It was a time when even English-educated people knew very little about the National movement. As regards the masses, they had never heard of it before and were not certain whether it was a man, an animal or a fetish. I could not say nay to my friend Bakshiji and promised to deliver 10 to 12 lectures on the aims and objects of the Congress at different places in the Punjab. I could not promise to do more, because I had only recently been appointed president of the Aryapratinidhi Sabha, the representative body of the Punjab Aryasamajas and the administrative burden of that body was heavy.

The first lecture of the series was arranged for Amrit-

sar. The Bandemataram Hall was engaged which had a seating capacity for some 1500 souls. Besides big posters being pasted at all principal places, more than a thousand hand-bills were distributed. I reached Amritsar a few hours before the time of the meeting and some thirty Arya brethren gathered at our Secretary's to talk about Aryasamaj matters. All of them accompanied me to the lecture-hall and seated themselves facing the stage which was occupied by Bakshi Jaishi Ram with 5 or 6 gentlemen from Lahore. At the appointed time the audience did not exceed 40 souls. I was asked to wait for 15 minutes more. The audience swelled up to 63 souls all told. I could not wait any longer and went on holding forth on the aims and claims of the Indian National Congress on the Indian people for one hour and a half. And when I counted the audience at the end, it had not risen over 67.

But my surprise knew no bounds when, after three days, I found a leading article in the daily *Tribune*, devoted to a description of the enthusiasm which prevailed. The house was said to have been full to over-flowing and my spirited and eloquent address was made to have evoked cheers after cheers. Like the simple soul that I have always been, I wrote to the Editor protesting against exaggerated statements and asked him to publish my plain unvarnished statement. My statement was never published but I was freed from my engagement and was never asked to speak on behalf of the Congress again.

But the Congress Committee went to work on other lines. Sir Syed Ahmed's Anti-Congress league was out for mischief and the best way of check-mating it was

considered to be the engagement of a Musalman Mukhtar who went through the Province enlisting Musalman members and popularizing the Congress propaganda amongst them. The gentleman worked with a will. The result of his endeavours was that scores of Muhammadan delegates joined the Congress session at Lahore. I shall deal with their connection with the Congress further on.

It was in the year 1892 that Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the grand old man of India, was returned by the Liberal constituency of Central Finsbury to the British House of Commons. Mr. Naoroji had been invited to preside over the Congress deliberations and had accepted the invitation. There was great enthusiasm throughout the country and when the man with a purpose, for being which he had been stigmatised a mad man, arrived at Lahore, the welcome which he received was at that time considered to be unique. His conveyance was unhorsed, and graduates and Raises of the city took it through the city. The educated community realized the triumph of an Indian being returned to the British Parliament but about a million of the masses who lined both sides of the city streets, knew nothing of Politics. They simply came to honour the man who would reduce the price of grain as he had become one of our rulers.

Let me describe the procedure of electing delegates, as it was then in vogue. The Secretary called a public meeting which was attended by about twenty souls. These met in deliberation and prepared a list of 41 gentlemen. The list was sent to the Press. The Secretary was given the power of co-opting as many delegates more as he liked. I was one of those 41 elected delegates.

The day of departure came. On the Jalandhar city Railway Station very few of those 41 turned up; but others were going. The Secretary went up to them and asked whether they would like to become delegates. The names of those who were likely to attend were added. This addition went on till the very opening day of the session.

I reached Lahore two days before the session was to begin and on the evening of the next day went with friends to have a look at the Congress Pandal. My friend, Bakshi Jaishi Ram, appeared to be much troubled. The delegates were to assemble next noon and the chairs were still lying in heaps outside the Pandal. Learning the cause of my friend's trouble I glanced towards the outer Maidan and noticing Aryasamajist loiterers there called them to me. Within two hours every seat was in its place. The Bakshiji mentioned another difficulty. The work of enlisting delegates and issuing tickets to them was progressing very slowly. I promised to look to that also.

The next morning I reached the Pandal early with Aryasamaj workers, and we distributed the work among ourselves. It was then found that almost every Muslim delegate, who was brought to be enlisted, was a 'Waiz' (religious preacher). And when the time for issuing tickets to them arrived, the Muslim Mukhtar propagandist asked the gentleman in charge of the tickets to issue them to Muslims without payment of Rs. 10 as delegate's fee. The matter being referred to me as general supervisor of the department, I refused to issue tickets without payment unless a written authority was brought from the General Secretary. The written autho-

rity was brought and tickets were issued to every Muslim 'Waiz' delegate free of charge. There was a further charge of Rs. 10 per head for those who messed in Indian fashion in the Congress Camp. That messing fee, too, was not charged to the Muslim delegates while they were served with all the delicacies of 'Dastarkhan.'

It was in this way that, in spite of Sir Syed Ahmed's efforts to the contrary, Muslim sympathy with the Congress was bolstered up. And these 'Waiz' delegates stopped in the Pandal only a few minutes in the beginning and were to be found enjoying creature comforts under the refreshment 'Shamianah' outside the Pandal for the rest of the sitting. This aspect of politics again disgusted me with the Congress propaganda work.

The session opened with great enthusiasm. The Grand Old Man of India got an ovation which has never been equalled. And when after the Reception Committee Chairman's address had been read by Lala Harkishan Lal and the name of Dadabhai Naoroji had been proposed and seconded in beautiful, loving language by Anandacharlu and others, the little figure of the Parsi patriot was seen at the presidential chair, the scene became indescribable. The audience became mad with enthusiasm. The President began to read his address in a clear penetrating voice and when he asked his audience to allow him to forget his identity for a moment and to rejoice with them that an Indian had got into the British Parliament, tears of joy were seen coursing down hundreds of cheeks. I felt as if I would go and fall down to worship the man who had so selflessly sacrificed his all at the altar of his country.

There are some incidents connected with that session of the Congress which are indelibly fixed in my memory. The first is that of Gopal Krishna Gokhale who came to speak on a very intricate question, gave facts, figures and arguments lucidly within five minutes and, when the audience called upon him to go on, said that he must obey the chair and left dragging his flowing dupatta after him. Then, in the session of the Social Conference when Gokhale came forward to speak on some subject and I was sitting with Dadabhai Naoroji with two others, Mr. Naoroji, who had been chatting with us cheerfully and making us laugh, became quiet and said—"I like this young man. Among longwinding oratorical bores he is the only man who talks sense, puts his case clearly within a few minutes and leaves an impression behind. He is the coming man."

The next impression is that of Pandit Mahadeva Govind Ranade, the Guru of Mr. Gokhale. I was known to Mr. Ranade by correspondence only in connection with the raising of the Jallundhar Kanya Pathshala to the status of a College. We met for the first time at Lahore. Unfortunately the Arya Samaj had been split up into two parties a year before. One difference of opinion was as regards high education to be imparted to Indian girls. The party to which I belonged (called at that time the Mahatma party) was for, while the opposite (called the cultured) party was against the proposal. The late Rai Narayana Das M.A. and I (representing both the parties) went to Mr. Ranade to assist him in drafting resolutions for the coming social conference. While we were talking about Arya Samaj affairs to Mr. Ranade who was one

of the earliest admirers and followers of Rishi Dayananda, Mr. Hume came to consult him about a proposed resolution of the political Congress. The question was to draft the resolution to the satisfaction of all. Within ten minutes Ranade did what could not be accomplished by the joint deliberations of the Congress Subjects Committee for as many hours. Mr. Ranade was a Judge of the Bombay High Court. But he attended every Session of the Congress as a visitor and helped the politicians in drafting resolutions. And what an apt pupil of the great Maharatta Leader Gokhale was came to light when at the Surat Congress of 1907, the Reception Committee remained puzzled as regards the drafts of resolutions until Gokhale arrived to their relief.

I had another experience of Ranade's overwhelming intellect. The cultured party of the Arya Samaj wanted to weaken the draft resolution about female education in the Punjab because they thought that the opening of any Aryan Girl's College would stand in the way of the financial prosperity of their D. A. V. College for boys. Mr. Ranade placed the resolution, drafted by myself and brother Devaraj, before Rais Mulraj and Narayan Das, asking them to amend it according to their lights. After they had worked at it unsuccessfully for two hours, Mr. Ranade took a paper in his hands and wrote out two alternative drafts. The Rais laid their fingers on one, and lo ! when the draft came before the open Session of the Social Conference it was found to be stronger in favour of high education for females than the one originally drafted by us. Ranade was a master mind and, in my opinion, really great as a patriot politician.

The last incident to which I will allude concerns my own self. One of the resolutions to be placed before the Congress dealt with the necessity of a High Court for the Punjab to take the place of its Chief Court. The turn of the resolution came at the fag end of the Session. I was asked to second it at the time when the proposer was going on with his opening oration. I agreed on the condition that I would not make a speech as I had no sufficient notice to think about what I was to say. I was taken to Mr. Allan O. Hume, (the Father of the Congress) and when he urged me to speak, as there was no other supporter, I could not say nay and went to the rostrum. The proposer had already compared the High and Chief Court Acts and the only argument that I could urge scandalized the house. Speaking of the independence of the highest Courts of justice and urging that the appointments etc. of Chief Court Judges being in the hands of the Indian Viceroy, they could not be independent in the truest sense of the word, I gave a concrete example of a Small Causes Court Judge of Bombay having refused a seat on the Punjab Chief Court Bench because of its anomalous position. The masses cheered but the oligarchy at the head of the Congress movement was scandalized because being the guests of the Province they did not like to give offence to the local authorities.

III

LUCKNOW SESSION

FOR full six years after the Lahore Session, I had no connection with any Congress movement. I was convinced that the fetters of slavery could not be broken asunder by drawing room politicians. In order to emancipate the motherland men of strong moral character were required. And Indians appeared to me to be fallen so low--physically, socially and morally that there was no hope of a change unless Indian humanity was resuscitated.

It was in this frame of mind that I read for the tenth time Rishi Dayananda's Satyarth Prakash and imbibed the true significance of the following precept of the Founder of the Arya Samaj (vide Chapter VIII):—

"When a country falls on evil days, the natives have to bear untold misery and suffering. Say what you will, the Swadeshiya Rajya (indigenous native rule) is by far the best. A foreign government, perfectly free from religious prejudices, impartial towards all the natives and foreigners alike, kind, beneficent and just to the natives like their parents though it may be, can never render the people perfectly happy.

It is extremely difficult to do away with differences in language, religion, education, customs and manners, but without doing that the people can never fully effect mutual good and accomplish their object. (Therefore) it behoves *all good people to hold in due respect the teach-*

ings of the Veda and the Shastras and ancient history."

Acting on this precept of my spiritual guru I concentrated my energies on the preaching of one Universal Catholic Vedic Dharma as the fountain-head of all religious sects and on laying the foundation of an educational system on lines of the ancient Brahmacharya Ashram. After a struggle for some years, the Arya Samaj issued a prospectus of the Gurukula system of education and I was entrusted with the work of popularising it and collecting funds for opening an Institution on these lines.

I was touring the country on the above mission when the Congress was going to be held at Lucknow, in December 1899. I thought it a nice opportunity for sending the message of the Gurukula to the different provinces of India and reached Lucknow in time for the Congress Session with Mr. Roshan Lal, Barrister of Lahore, who went there as a delegate. I put up in the Congress Camp as a paying guest. The delegate's fee (Rs. 10) at that time covered also the mess expenses and sympathizing non-delegates were allowed board and lodging on payment of the same sum. The Lahore Congress Secretary asked me to become a delegate as I had already paid Rs. 10 but I declined to be a party to fraud. In spite of that, a certificate of delegacy was brought to me and I wondered at its being obtained without my signing any paper. At this juncture the late Babu Ganga Prasad Verma noticed me and giving me a Complimentary Visitor's Ticket, took me to the dais.

Sitting on the dais, the first thing that I noticed was that the number of Muslim delegates was proportionately fourfold of what it was at Lahore in 1893. The majority

of Muslim delegates had donned gold, silver or silk embroidered chogas (flowing robes) over their ordinary coarse suits of wearing apparel. It was rumoured that these "chogas" had been lent by Hindu moneyed men for Congress Tamasha. Of some 433 Muslim delegates only some 30 had come from outside; the rest belonged to Lucknow City. And of these the majority were admitted free to delegates' seats, board and lodging. Sir Syed Ahmed's anti-Congress League had tried in a public meeting to dissuade Muslims from joining the Congress as delegates. As a counter-move the Congress people lighted the whole Congress Camp some four nights before the session began and advertised that ingress that night would be free. The result was that all the "Chandu Khanas" of Lucknow were emptied and a huge audience of some thirty thousand Hindus and Muslims was addressed from half a dozen platforms. It was there that the Muslim delegates were elected or selected. All this was admitted by the Lucknow Congress organizers to me in private.

A show was being made of the Muslim delegates. A Muslim delegate gets up to second a resolution in Urdu. He begins—"Hazarat! I am a Muhammadan delegate." Some Hindu gets up and calls for three cheers for Mohammadan delegates—and the response is so enthusiastic as to be beyond description. The Muhammadan delegate at once begins to lash the 'anti-wallahs' right and left, the audience enjoys the entertainment and when the speaker is about to finish without reading the resolution in Urdu or even attending to it, he is approached by a Secretary and asked, in a whisper, to read the resolution. The Muhammadan delegate then acknow-

ledges his mistake in an aside, which is audible to the whole audience, says that he would do so and haltingly reads out the Urdu translation.

The Congress was still a drawing room affair. Lokmanya Tilak had come out of jail and was in Lucknow as a delegate. When he entered the Pandal and was quietly going to sit among the Bombay delegates, some one noticed him and getting up, called for three cheers for the leader of the people. The whole audience, including those on the dais, was on its legs ; only a dozen or so leading oligarchs remained sitting. The huge audience called Lokmanya to go to the dais ; the faces of the oligarch leaders were white with alarm ; they feared the contamination of the extremist leader. At this crisis Lokmanya refused to budge from his seat and the oligarchs were reassured. The crisis passed.

It was at Lucknow that I saw Lokmanya Tilak for half an hour during recess, an account of which interview, with my impressions of the great departed Patriot, has been contributed to his Reminiscences. He was the one real champion of Indian Swarajya among all the Carpet Knights assembled there.

Mr. Ranade was there in order to help the Political Leaders in drafting resolutions and to guide the deliberations of the Social Conference to which the title of 'National' was for the first and the last time given. It was from the very beginning a Hindu Conference but Mr. Ranade wanted to unite Hindus and Muslims in all walks of life. The only Muhammadan delegate, who joined the Indian National Social Conference, was a Mufti saheb from Barreilly. Well, the Conference began. When the

resolution in favour of the re-marriage of child widows was moved by a Hindu delegate and seconded by me, a Sanatanist Pandit opposed it. Then the Mufti saheb asked permission to speak. The President (the late Rai Baijnath) told Mufti saheb that as the resolution concerned Hindus only, he need not speak. At this Muftiji flared up "Tab is-ka nam Naishanel kuyn rakkha hai?" There was no loophole left for the President, and Mufti Saheb was allowed to have his say. Mufti Saheb's argument was that as Hindu Shastras did not allow re-marriage, it was a sin to press for it. Again when the resolution about the reconversion of those who had become Christians and Musalmans came up, Mufti Saheb urged that when a man became an apostate and abandoned the Hindu religion, he ought not to be allowed to come back and contaminate the sacred Hindu Society. Well, Mr. Ranade and other Hindu leaders were non-plussed, while Mufti Saheb must have been laughing in his sleeves. The next year, Mr. Ranade was seriously ill in December, and did not attend the Lahore Congress, but no one after that dared to dub the Social Conference as "National."

At the Lucknow Congress of 1899 there were other incidents connected with the moral character of Congressmen which disgusted me with the movement. In my own special Mission of the Gurukula propaganda I was completely successful. The Congress Pandal was placed at my disposal one night, the venerable Kashmiri Pandit Shyamlal presided over the meeting which I addressed and even the politicians appeared to be impressed with the message which I gave for the resuscitation of the Ancient Aryan system of Brahmacharya.

IV

BAL-PAL-LAL

THE next year (1900 A.D.) the Session of the Indian National Congress was a second time held at Lahore. I was so indifferent to the activities of that body that I did not go to Lahore during the time that it was holding its sitting and reached only on the day when everything was over. What took me to Lahore was the sitting of the Social Conference, which had wisely discarded its title 'national' and was concerned with passing resolutions for the reform of the Hindu Society alone. Mr. Ranade being seriously ill, the task of piloting the Social barge fell on Mr. Gokhale whom I was asked to assist. Sir (then Mr.) Narayana Chandavarkar presided at the Congress Session and was soon after raised to the Bombay High Court Bench. It became a common adage at the time that the Presidentship of the National Congress was the passage which led to the High Court tribunal.

Lokmanya Tilak also went to join the Lahore Session. I wanted to meet him again in order to discuss with him the place he assigned to the Vedas in the Arya polity but he was so much engaged during the one remaining day of his sojourn in the Punjab that I could get no opportunity of having a confidential talk with him. As regards Tilak's personality I had already formed my opinion at Lucknow, which has appeared in "Lokmanya's reminiscence" by S. V. Bapat. There I have said :—

"As a follower of the Vedas I wanted to meet Lokmanya personally. When the audience rose for lunch, Lokmanya alone remained sitting and I took advantage of the occasion to go and have a talk with him. I conversed with him on the interpretation of the well-known Vedic Mantra on Varna-Vyavastha and was surprised to find that his views coincided with those of Rishi Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj. (These views have since then been incorporated in the great scholar's Gita-Rahasya).

" I watched him keenly during the half hour that I talked to him and found that he was always meditating on something very serious in which his soul appeared absorbed. A friend—a moderate leader—speaking of Tilak had told me :—" Tilak is great in intellect but—ah ! his ambition is something terrible." I saw him with another eye and found that he had no personal ambition. He brooded on the wrongs of his motherland and his determination to liberate his country appeared to me to be really terrible."

For the next six years I never happened to be at the place where the Annual Gathering of the Congress took place ; but I was keenly watching the political developments in the country. And when occasion arrived I used to comment freely on these developments in my weekly Saddharma Pracharak. It was during the memorable years that the Curzonian Durbar led the way to the Partition of Bengal against which measure the agitation of the Bengalees electrified the whole of educated India. During those days the extremist party was led by a trinity called Bal—Pal—Lal. Bal stood for Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Pal for Bipin Chandra Pal and Lal

for Lala Lajpatrai. Although the father of the Moderate party in politics—I mean Sir Perozshah Mehta—was living, yet the active leader of the party was Gopal Krishna Gokhale. During the Extremist-Moderate controversy, I approved of the doings of Mr. Gokhale and made no secret of my views. I was against making use of students by political leaders in their demonstrations against the British Bureaucracy. My faith in the potentiality of the Gurukula system of education, based on the foundation of Brahmacharya, was confirmed by a study of the political happenings of that period.

In the beginning of May 1907, Lala Lajpat Rai was deported. The British Bureaucracy got information that Lalaji was about to lead more than a lakh of urban and rural anarchists against the Government and that Ajit Singh acted as his lieutenant. Lalaji was considered to be the leader of the educated and the student Punjab. This was reported by the C. I. D. But facts were all the other way. When Lalaji was deported he was so unpopular among the student community that he could not dare to appear in public meetings at Lahore. Ajit Singh and his co-workers had broken loose out of his influence and there was no likelihood of his regaining his influence soon because he had been vehemently denouncing the Gurukula and its promoters immediately before the time that he was deported. But his deportation changed his whole position. Lalaji suddenly became an all India leader ; above each and all he became the the topmost national martyr and the Gurukulaites stood up for his innocence when his own party in Aryasamaj refused to be responsible for his actions.

It was under the above circumstances that being unable to get a footing in the Tilakite extremist centre at Nagpur, the moderates thought of holding the session of 1907 at Surat. But after the middle of November Lalaji was suddenly brought from Mandalay to Lahore at his residence one fine morning and released. The moderates had decided that the celebrated scholar and lawyer Dr. Rash Behary Ghosh should preside. The extremists, led by Lokmanya Tilak, were determined to oppose Dr. Ghosh's election and meant to set up Lala Lajpat Rai against him. I was not interested in this controversy, but the Aryasamaj people proposed to preach the Vedic Dharma on that occasion and I went to Surat at their invitation. I reached a day late and the disgraceful scene of shoe-throwing and breaking of chairs had passed away when I reached Surat the next morning. Lokmanya was putting up in a Wadi with the whole of his contingent. Leaders and followers all slept on the ground and messed together. They appeared to be knitted to each other. It was one solid body of stern puritans. Lalaji was not there and was midway between them acting the part of cement. I went to the Moderate camp and found them located in a dozen bungalows and tents enjoying every sort of luxury. I told my friends and associates then and there :—"The future of the Motherland rests in the palm of the party which has been dubbed extremists."

In 1909 the Session of the Congress was for the third time called at Lahore. Lala Harkishan Lal was appointed chairman of the Reception Committee, and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji was to preside. It was

considered to be a moderate Congress and people expected it to be a tame affair. But Lala Harkishan Lal's address was not at all moderate and Mr. Gokhale's plea on behalf of the South African Indians under the leadership of Mr. (afterwards Mahatma) Gandhi, was not only a masterpiece of eloquence but a soul-stirring appeal to Indian patriotism. I was then defending the hundreds of Aryasamajists who had been clapped into Hajat in the Patiala State at the special instigation of the Punjab Government, and was on a visit to Lahore in connection with the same.

I joined the Congress Meeting as a visitor. The speeches were powerful and patriotic. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu, Babu Surendra Nath Banerji and Sir Ashutosh Chaudhri, among others, electrified the audience. I asked the leading advocate of Lahore, Sir Pratula Chandra Chatterji, to defend the Patiala accused. I offered Rs. 500 per diem as his fee. He promised to consider my offer but could not make up his mind owing to the opposition of Lady Chatterji. Some leading Aryasamajist Counsel were approached but all had some excuse or other ready for not going to Patiala. I approached Sir A. Chaudhri through Babu Surendra Banerji, but he could only promise to come five days, including days spent in journey, if Rs. 1250 per diem could be paid. It was only Rai Badridas, M.A. from Jallundhar and Lala Dwaraka Das, M.A. from Lahore who helped us on one hearing each. I have mentioned this fact to show that while knowing well the mailed fist of the British bureaucracy being behind this attack on the Aryasamaj, patriotism could not make the least sacrifice for defending men whose

only fault was that they never worshipped at the altar of bureaucracy.

The next session assembled at Allahabad, Sir William Wedderburn was brought all the way from England to preside. The Aryasamaj made grand preparations for preaching the Vedic Dharma on the occasion, because on account of a Unique Exhibition which was to be opened by the Government a large number of visitors was expected. I was invited by the Aryasamaj people and as Mr. Gokhale had also asked me to go to Allahabad for meeting Sir W. Wedderburn, I had again the good fortune to attend the Congress Session as a visitor. Even the presence of Sir W. Wedderburn was unable to infuse energy into the effete limbs of the Congress.

A Hindu-Muslim conciliation board also sat to devise means for Unity. I joined the deliberations at the special request of Sir William. The final meeting was held under the joint presidentship of their highnesses of Durbhanga and Sultan Sir Agha. Everybody conceived something but their joint efforts brought forth nothing. There was a somewhat warm discussion on Urdu *v.* Hindi question. One Muhammadan gentleman affirmed that unless Urdu was acknowledged to be the *Lingua Franca* of India, there could be no understanding with the Hindus.

In the Social Conference the question of the so-called untouchables being counted as Hindus during the coming census came up for discussion. The orthodox Hindu leaders were awakened from their lethargy and held forth on their being kith and kin of the Hindu Society. I was also asked to speak. I told the Hindus plainly that they ought to have awakened long ago. I further tried to

impress upon them the necessity of giving the so-called untouchables full social and religious rights as a matter of bare justice and that they should not act on the selfish principle of adding to their political importance.

After this I took no notice of the activities of the Congress for six long years. During this interval I attended the Coronation Ceremony of King George V, Emperor of India, as a press representative. Sir James (now Lord) Meston paid three visits to the Gurukula; Lord Hardinge gave three lengthy interviews to me in order to discuss the Gurukula system of education and Lord Chelmsford paid a visit to the Gurukula at the end of October 1916. Mahatma Gandhi had come to the Gurukula in April 1915 in order to take away his Phœnix Gurukula boys from Kangri, where they had been for some months, awaiting the arrival of their Acharya, the Great Mahatma.

The session of December 1916, at Lucknow, was a memorable one. It was there that the Moderates and the Extremists were reconciled. The Venerable Babu Ambicacharan Muzumdar presided. The gathering was unique. Some well-known Muhammadan leaders also joined and the well-known Hindu-Muslim political pact was entered into. The enthusiasm was at the highest pitch. It appeared that political India had found its soul. As leader after leader came to the rostrum, every sentence he uttered was received with resounding cheers. Surendra Babu's denunciation of the coming Governor of Bengal, Mrs Annie Besant's dubbing of the English as colourless people, Sadhu Mazhar-ul-Haq's straightforward appeal to Muslims, the Rajah of Mahmoodabad's patriotic response

—every word was drunk by willing ears. At last Lokmanya Tilak stood up in his simple *Dhoti* and Maratha slippers. He was given an ovation and then the audience was hushed into silence. Simple sentences came out of his mouth slowly in natural tones and every word that he uttered was gathered up silently by the assembled thousands. Among other things, he said—" The British tell us that we, descendants of the Aryans, are not the original owners of the soil. We took the country from the Aborigines ; the Muslims conquered it from the Aryans and the English conquered it from the Muslims. Hence the British are the guardians of the Aborigines. Well, I agree to this and ask the British to clear out bag and baggage and deliver possession of the country to Bhils, Gonds and Adi-Dravids &c. We will gladly serve the owners of the soil." There was laughter and cheers. But when explaining further he said in his natural, simple voice : " Home rule is my birth-right and I will have it," the whole Pandal resounded with one combined resonant voice. The acme of enthusiasm was reached and the whole house was brought down.

I attended the Lucknow sitting of the Congress also as a visitor but behind the scenes I had to do something with the negotiations that were going on. The new Hindu-Muslim pact was privately discussed in my presence. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mr. C. Y. Chintamani were, both, against the pact. They could not agree to communal representation and communal votings. In informal talks I, too, was in agreement with their views. The next matter with which I had something to do was the Meston-Marris-Curtis circular containing the germs

of diarchy in their recommendation for the coming reforms. Lord Meston specially invited me to his house and asked me to hear Mr. Curtis who was very much put out by his proposal seeing the light of day. I heard him patiently for more than an hour and promised to introduce him to Mahatma Gandhi the next day. I fulfilled my promise and got full opportunity for him to lay his case before Gandhiji. But in the meantime Mr. Pollock of South African fame came in and spoiled the work of Mr. Curtis's defence.

Lord Meston called me to help Mr. Curtis because it was partly on my advice that he attended the Congress Session, where the exposed circular was commented on in bad taste. In spite of all the enthusiasm that was in evidence I was not at all drawn towards the Congress programme at Lucknow and considered the work in which I was engaged to be the only means of salvation of the motherland.

VI

STONES FOR BREAD

IN 1917 Mrs. (now Dr.) Annie Besant was selected to preside over the deliberations of the Congress to be held at Calcutta. She had tried to reconcile Tilak and Gokhale and had laid the foundation of her Home Rule League. She was extremely popular at the time. All her vagaries in connection with the Theosophical propaganda had been forgotten and Indian politicians were in the palm of her hands, for the time being. It was at such a time she was taken to a sanitarium and there interned by Lord Pentland. The agitation against the bureaucracy was intense and political India was at its wits' end how to checkmate this cunning move of its enemies. I wrote in my weekly advising the Congress business to go on undisturbed, to ask Mrs. Besant to write out her presidential address and, placing her portrait on the presidential chair, to have her address read and then to go on passing resolutions. My advice was generally approved by the Press but the time for following it never came, because Mrs. Besant was released before it could be put into practice.

Before the session of 1918 met at Delhi, Mr. Montague had come and held discussions with Indian political leaders as regards the Reforms to be introduced for leading the country on to self-government. It was a move at the right time because political India had helped the

British Government in its struggle for Commercial and Economic supremacy with the overawing German power. Every leader was on tiptoe of expectation to be consulted. But the advice which I gave to those of the political leaders whom I knew was to avoid giving any detailed opinion in a round table conference. What I wrote to them, in substance was this—"The British are born diplomats. Their diplomacy has dominated both the hemispheres for the last one thousand years. The unsophisticated Indian politician cannot hold his own in round table conferences with them. I advise you, therefore, to avoid separate conferences with Mr. Montague. Let all deliberate together and place their joint demand before him asking him to devise means in order to lighten the burden on the Indian tax-payer."

My advice fell on deaf ears. And how could political leaders of the people pay the least heed to the advice of a man who, besides being obsessed with religious mania, was outside their charmed circle? Mr. Montague's Private Secretary, Mr. Kisch, met me at Hardwar. He was introduced to me by his friend Mr. C. Hobart, a great admirer of the Gurukula, and that time Joint Magistrate of Roorkee. We had a very interesting talk about the coming reforms. He put before me the difficulties in the way of Mr. Montague and I tried to combat them. When asked how to get rid of the difficulty of giving the power of legislation to people who had no hand in putting that law into practice, my reply was that if all the members of the Executive Council be elected by the Legislature and be held responsible to that body there could not be any real conflict of interests. I advised

Mr. Kisch to induce Mr. Montague to meet Mahatma Gandhi. I heard afterwards that Mr. Montague did meet Gandhiji but instead of giving any advice as to the practicability of the intended reforms, Mahatma Gandhi said, in substance—"My country is awfully poor and your administration is terribly expensive. If you want to give any reward to India for services rendered during the war, do lighten the burden of taxation." If this rumour has any legs to stand upon, who can deny that Mahatma Gandhi was the only man who grasped the situation and gave a statesmanlike advice?

It was under the abovementioned circumstances that the Congress met at Delhi in the last week of December 1918. All the parties—Moderates, Extremists, Home Rulers etc.—mustered strong and every voice was heard to exclaim—"Westward Ho!" The advice that Congress alone should send a deputation was brushed aside and every party sent its own representatives to England. I was not the least interested in all this. Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya presided for the second time and Hakeem Ajmal Khan was Chairman of the Reception Committee. I attended only one day, as a visitor, of course, and saw enough to make me keep away afterwards. I saw two young extremists from the Punjab bringing down the house by their fallacious declamations and perorations; I knew their private character and when later they came into the grip of the Martial law and were clapped in Jail they did not scruple in climbing down to the most degrading devices for the purpose of coming out of jail.

Well, the Congress Session was over and, forgetting all about the activities of its promoters, I gave myself

up to the literary programme chalked out by me two years before, at the time of my entering the Sanyas Ashram. But " Man proposes, God disposes."

The Rowlatt Bills had been placed before the Viceroy's Legislative Council and the Indian people were astounded to find stones served out to them in place of the delicious dishes which they had been expecting. The agitation created was not only widespread but intense also. A daily Hindi—" Vijaya "—was started under my patronage and edited by Professor Indra Vidyavachaspati, a graduate of the Gurukula. It roused the masses, not only in Delhi but in all the adjoining Districts of the Punjab, the whole of the U.P., the C.P., Rajasthan and Bihar etc. Thousands of copies were daily printed but still the demand was not satisfied. That paper was the first to take up the cudgels on behalf of Turkey and to induce the Hindus to join hands with the Muslim brethren in defending that cause. If official news is to be believed, Lord Chelmsford's one count against me in his correspondence with Mr. Montague was that my son was editing this rabid Hindi Paper which was giving a great deal of trouble to the authorities.

The session of the Viceroy's Council, that year, was principally taken up by the consideration of these two Bills. Almost all the Indian Members showed a united front in opposing these measures. Mr. Srinivas Shastri had delivered a splendid speech. His arguments were unanswerable. Every patriot spoke with fervour and logic but Mr. Shastri's speech appeared to me the most forceful. The Government was stubborn and moved not an inch. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya came to me with a mes-

sage that all the members proposed walking out if there was no response on behalf of the Government at the end, but that they were not sure of Mr. Shastri. I was asked to work upon him, because they knew that through my relations with the late Gopal Krishna Gokhale, I had some influence with Mr. Shastri. I went to see him in the Metcalfe House. On my being seated Mr. Shastri said —"Have you seen the new vagary of your Mahatma Gandhi? Please read this. I must issue my protest against it." The words are indelibly fixed in my memory.

The issue of the "Leader," in which Mahatma Gandhi's plea for Satyagrah was published, was handed over to me. After reading merely the preamble I said —"It is the first principle of human rights. I, myself, am ready to sign it. Did not Gandhiji consult any of you before issuing his manifesto?" The reply was that not only this—that Gandhiji sent round his manifesto to all the Council members and even to the Viceroy but that he asked them to convince him if he was in the wrong. He was open to conviction. I urged Mr. Shastri not to stand in the way of a just cause, and said :—"Why should you go out of your way to protest against a measure for which you are not responsible? If you do not agree with Gandhi's views, you may not join the movement." Mr. Shastri's reply was that he must publish his own protest against Gandhi's Ukase and my counter reply was that I must wire at once to Mahatma Gandhi that I had signed the vow of Satyagrah as a protest against Rowlatt Bills.

When I came back to my Ashram I opened that day's 'Leader' and found Mr. Shastri's protest Ukase

already there. I at once sent the following telegram to Mahatma Gandhi. "Have signed Satyagrah vow just now. Glad to join in this Dharma Yudha." While my telegram was on its way to Mahatma Gandhi, he himself was on his way to Delhi. The next day Gandhiji reached Delhi and put up with Principal Rudra of the St. Stephen's College, Delhi. Why he put up with Mr. Rudra rather than with any other person in Delhi, the following letter addressed to me will explain :—

Phœnix, Natal,
21 Oct. 1914.

Dear Mahatmaji,

Mr. Andrews has familiarised your name and your work to me. I feel that I am writing to no stranger. I hope, therefore, that you will pardon me addressing you by the title which both Mr. Andrews and I have used in discussing you and your work. Mr. Andrews told also how you, Gurudeva and Mr. Rudra had influenced him. He described to me the work your pupils did for the Passive resisters and gave such word pictures of the life at Gurukula that as I am writing this I seem to be transported to the Gurukula. Indeed he has made me impatient to visit the three places described by Mr. Andrews and to pay my respects to the three good sons of India who are at the head of these institutions.

I remain,
Yours,
Mohandas K. Gandhi.

Some of the allusions in the above letter require elucidation. In 1914 Gandhiji had again revived passive resistance in South Africa. Mr. Gokhale had appealed for some lakhs to help the passive resisters but response was not coming. The Brahmacharies of the Gurukula collected about Rs. 1500 by denying themselves milk and ghee for a month and by working on the Hardwar Bund as common labourers during three days' holiday. This money was wired to Mr. Gokhale and the message reached him when he was on the point of despair. In talking of my disciples Gandhiji alludes to that. By Gurudeva he means the world poet Dr. Rabindranath Tagore. This letter was the first that I received from the Mahatma as I dubbed him afterwards when he went to the Gurukula in April 1915, and it was the last that he addressed to me in English. The reason was that I sent my reply in Hindi with the remark that one who wanted to make Hindi the *rashtra-bhasha* (national language) had no right to correspond with his countrymen in a foreign language.

VII

DHARMIK YUDDHA

I JOINED the Satyagraha Army without reading the whole constitution of the movement. The Committee which was to decide the nature of the laws to be disobeyed was organised at Bombay. In a way the movement was centralized. But in my opinion local freedom was necessary in order to make the disobedience of laws effective.

I asked the Mahatma to let me know his proposals and scheme of work. He told me that a beginning was to be made by selling publicly, proscribed literature after informing the Police. I thought that the astute bureaucracy will laugh out the move and put my own proposals before Mahatmaji. My first proposal was to start *Panchayet Adalats* (arbitration boards) and thus boycott the British Courts indirectly. My second proposal was to prepare at least ten districts for refusal to pay land-revenue and taxes simultaneously by October 1919, when the first instalment of Kharif revenue would fall due. I promised to prepare five Districts in the Punjab, where Hindu Jats were predominant and asked him to prepare the same number of Districts in Gujarat Province, where his influence, on account of Kaira District and Ahmedabad Mills Satyagraha, was all that could be desired. But Mahatmaji smiled and said :—"Bhai sahab! You will acknowledge that I am an expert in Satyagrah business.

I know what I am about." There could be no gainsaying the fact and I bowed my head to his decision.

There was another difficulty. No Local Satyagrah Committee could begin work without the sanction of the head Sabha at Bombay. And that too was necessary, in Mahatmaji's view, in order to maintain discipline.

A Satyagrah Sabha was established at Delhi of which Dr. M. A. Ansari became the President. Dr. Abdur Rahman and Pandit Indra became Secretaries and Lala Shankarlal was appointed Treasurer. The new disciples had a very interesting and instructive talk with Mahatma Gandhi. While Mahatmaji was explaining the Satyagrah aphorisms (Sutras) to Hindus and Muslims alike a prominent leader said :—" Mahatmaji ! How can you expect a Musalman, who eats at least half a seer of flesh daily, to act like a Satyagrahi ? A Muslim is unaccustomed to suffer beatings like a lamb and he cannot but turn Duragrahi at the end." Mahatmaji smiled and said :—" Bhai—They will come round by and by."

A public meeting was called for 7th March 1919 and after Mahatmaji's speech had been read by Mr. Mahadev Desai, he left to see the Viceroy and the Home Member with whom an appointment had been previously made. Mahatmaji went to intercede for the release of the Ali Brothers who were then interned in Chindwara. It was the first time, after more than a quarter of a century, that I stood up to speak on a political subject. The gathering was about 18,000. The public was astonished to see me on my legs. I gave free vent to my feelings and urged that the movement was more Dharmic than political. The Arya Samajists appeared to be thunderstruck, but except

a single exception all came round to my views and gradually even those who were in the front rank in religious discussions were attracted towards the movement. It was a sight for the Gods to see Pandit Ramchandra Mahopadeshak of the Arya Samaj and Maulvi Ahmad Sayeed *waiz* (preacher) of the Muhammadan Church—both redoubtable champions of their several faiths—sitting side by side and supporting each other in their tirades against the British bureaucracy. In the beginning I was only a member of the Satyagrah Sabha executive and on 10th March left Delhi for Baroda and Bombay in order to study the Technical and Industrial institutions of those places for drawing up a scheme of Techno-industrial course of instruction in connection with the Gurukula University (Vishwa Vidyalaya) at Kangri. The 11th and 12th of March were devoted to the study of the Kalabhawan at Baroda. On 13th I reached Bombay where Mahatma Gandhi was already guiding the movement. A mass meeting was held on the seashore at Chaupati. It was a huge audience that assembled to hear the Apostle of Satyagrah. Mahatmaji being still weak, his written address was read by another. At Mahatmaji's special request I also spoke with Mr. Horniman and Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas. I was at once caught by the Bombayites in the net of this new movement and had to give up my intended visit to the Tata Institute at Bangalore and to the other Madras and Bengal technical institutions. I had to speak at five different places in Bombay. Mahatmaji was asked to go to Madras, but the anniversary of his success in getting a substantial increase in the wages of the Mill-hands falling on 20th March he was

unable to proceed to Madras unless some person could be found to address the Mill-hands on that day. I was asked by Mahatma Gandhi to act as his substitute and I left Bombay for Surat on the evening of 17th and 18th March. I spoke at Surat to 10,000 people assembled in Maidan. On 19th I broke journey at Broach, where an enthusiastic meeting was addressed. On 20th morning I reached Ahmedabad. In the afternoon a huge audience numbering about thirty thousand, chiefly mill-hands, assembled on the banks of Sabarmati to celebrate the first anniversary of the success of Satyagrah there. It was a task to make myself intelligible to that huge audience. In the evening a Satyagrah meeting was held attended by not less than 15,000 souls. It was the report of my lecture at that place which upset Lord Chelmsford and compelled him to cable his memorable message to Mr. Montague in which he specially mentioned the fact of my joining hands with Gandhiji.

On 21st March 1919, I left Sabarmati by the morning mail and reached Delhi the next forenoon. I was surprised to find that the whole agitation had subsided and not one single meeting was held in my absence. The work of signing the Satyagrah vow was also at a standstill. A meeting was advertised for 24th March evening. The audience had fallen to 5,000. Dr. Ansari presided. In that meeting I asked the audience to sign the vow in large numbers and exhorted the Satyagrahis to remain non-violent and calm under all conditions and not to play in the hands of Sir William Vincent, the Home Member who had prophesied in the Council Chamber that non-violence will lead to violence. Another meeting was called

for 27th March. Dr. Ansari was absent being called away on a professional visit to Bhopal and I presided. The audience had risen to 12,000 souls. A third meeting was held on 29th March for giving special instructions to observe Hartal on the 30th March 1919, being the second Sunday after the Rowlatt Act was signed by the Viceroy. It was to be a day of humiliation and fasting when all business was to be suspended, people were to fast and hold protest meetings against the Rowlatt Act and for petitioning the King-Emperor to veto the passed Bill. To these conditions contained in Mahatma Gandhi's manifesto I added one more, namely—"Every person should on that day meditate for half an hour and pray to *Paramatma* that He may turn the hearts of our opponents." And to emphasize this condition I said "With the exercise of will-power we could impress the hearts even of King-Emperor George, the Premier and Mr. Montague sitting in England." A poster giving Instructions for the observance of the day of humiliation was sent round and published in the local dailies. It ran as follows :—

What is to be done ?

(1) The 30th of March should be celebrated as a day of mourning.

(2) Beginning from the night of March 29th all should fast till the night of 30th March.

(3) After finishing all other daily duties, should sit in a quiet place and should pray to the Paramatma that He might give us the power of endurance, guide our

Sarkar in the path of rectitude and put an end to the troubles of Mother Bharat.

(4) Closing all business and shops etc., should spend the day in wishing well for the country, in reforming his own mind and in philanthropic work.

(5) Every woman, man and child should attend the evening meeting at 5 o'clock."

The Delhi Morning Post dated 30th March 1919 came out in the evening of 29th with a leading article on this in which it most mischievously suggested that the Delhi leaders were inducing people to fast so that they might be lashed to fury. We again held another preliminary meeting on March 29th in which a speaker read out and commented on the leading article of the Morning Post. I was presiding on that day also and remembering the concluding speech of Sir William Vincent in the Imperial Legislative Council of India at the passing of the Rowlatt Bill into Act where he had insinuated that Passive Resistance was sure to be turned into Active resistance by men other than Mr. Gandhi. I made the following prophetic remarks in my concluding speech. I said, "The suggestion of the Anglo-Indian Paper may have a hidden meaning. The Local authorities might try to prove Sir William Vincent a true prophet and therefore I exhort you all not to allow them to make you a scape-goat in this....." What occurred on the 30th of March 1919, to my knowledge, was written by me on the morning of the 31st of March, 1919, at the request of the Reporter of the Associated Press at Delhi, when all occurrences were fresh in my memory. That statement I now

put before the public as made to the Hunter Committee at Delhi.

Incidents of March 30, 1919.

"On Sunday, March 30th, every shop and business place was closed from the Morning. Returning from the Morning service in the local Aryasamaj Mandir, I patrolled through the city. Tramcars had ceased plying because none would use them and even tongas etc. had stopped and all was quiet with thousands of peaceful subjects walking on the foot-paths. I returned to my place after 12 noon, intending to go to the meeting after four.

At two, some gentlemen came running from the Railway Station saying that as some people asked the Station Shops to close, a European Railway Official came and threatened them. When told it was no business of his to interfere, he had whistled to the police, who took two men out of the collected mass in custody. The Masses said that if their men were given up they would go away. Then the police began to belabour them with sticks and Soldiers with a Machine-gun were arriving when they left to report to me.

I left on foot immediately for the Railway Station. There I heard the Machine gun had fired indiscriminately and about a dozen had either been killed or wounded, the bodies being dragged into the station yard. Those hit included a Railway Passenger with one woman, so they said.

I saw Goorkhas coming running from the opposite side. British soldiers were already there. I went to some

Europeans of whom one was Mr. Currie, City Magistrate, and asked them to tell me the true facts. They treated me with indifference, Mr. Currie actually turning his back upon me. I told him that I was taking the people away to meeting ground, although early, and he ought not to irritate people by making a display of military and machine guns. The whole crowd, some three to four thousand followed and assembled on the Peoples' park grounds.

The number was swelling and had risen to 25,000 and I was addressing them, exhorting them to act like Satyagrahis and to control their sorrow and anger, when intelligence reached that *GORA* (British) soldiers had fired near the Clock-Tower and that another dozen or so had been pierced with bullets. Some began to be excited and I again managed to pacify them.

But then two British military officers on horse-back came in full speed with some sowars and wanted to talk to me. I went out and asked the officers the meaning of this interference. I said that it was a meeting of peaceful citizens and they were exasperating the people by a show of military aggression. The officer said he would not interfere with the peaceful meeting but a brick-bat had just passed him. I replied that I had not noticed any brick-bat passing and asked the audience who said they had noticed nothing. The officer went away with the sowars saying that it was not their object to disperse a peaceful meeting.

The crowd was becoming huge and after putting up a platform in the maidan, we removed there. The crowd (some 40,000 people), had hardly settled itself and after

exhorting them in the name of Satyagrah to remain calm I had hardly commenced a prayer to the Almighty when the same sowars came galloping again with a Muhammadan police officer, Mr. Currie and the Chief Commissioner. In the meantime a machine gun had rattled to the very door of the meeting in the maidan. I came down from the platform and had to go to the Chief Commissioner who asked me what we were going to do and how long the meeting would last. I answered that a resolution of protest against the Rowlatt Bills would be sent to Mr. Montague and the meeting would last till 6-30 P.M. He asked me about the speakers and their names were given. Then he told me that if I gave an assurance that the feelings of the people would not be stirred and that the crowd would quietly disperse to their homes, he would not interfere with the meeting.

In reply I said, "I am personally responsible and I had been pacifying those whose relatives had been shot and wounded, but if on our way back your military give trouble again I will not be responsible. Then the responsibility will rest with you." I explained all the facts and said : "Intelligence has come that a machine gun again discharged a volley near the Clock-Tower." The Chief Commissioner said in reply that no machine gun was fired near the Clock-Tower. I said in that case I could reassure the people saying that no people had been injured near the Clock-Tower. The Chief Commissioner, on this, quietly said that rifles had been fired and not a machine gun. Then came further enquiry from me, "Was anybody injured?" The reply was "I do not know and therefore cannot say."

Then the Chief Commissioner told me to give a message of his to the people to act on the instructions of Mr. Gandhi and create no disturbance. I was all along speaking in a loud voice which thousands heard. Then I mounted the platform and asked the assembled people about what I had been telling them. They all said that they would never depart from the principles of Satyagrah. Whatever oppression they suffered they would bear with patience.

The Chief Commissioner went away saying that if the meeting dispersed quietly, neither the military nor the police would interfere. The meeting went on. The resolution to be sent to Mr. Montague was adopted unanimously.

I asked the huge audience to follow me and to leave quietly when nearing their residences. We were walking in order. When we were nearing the Clock-Tower, Goorkhas were in the middle of the road in double file facing both ways. On seeing us they marched to the right foot-board. We thought they had left the road in order to enable us to proceed but when we reached near them, a rifle was fired into the crowd. There was a stir and a deep tone of resentment among the crowd. But I asked all to halt and they obeyed. In my Sanyasi dress I went up to the foot-path alone and asked the Goorkhas why they were firing on innocent peaceful people. Two rifles were immediately pointed at me and they began saying in a very insolent tone "tum ko ched denge" (We will pierce you). I stood quietly before them and said "Main khara hun, goli maro" (I am standing, fire). At once eight or ten more rifles were aimed at my breast

and insolent threats went on.

The crowd could contain itself no longer and was about to rush, when a wave of my hand and a short appeal to their Vow stopped them. But they were saying "let us die and not you, let us die." The rifles had remained pointed at my breast for some three minutes when a European on horseback approached and asked the only policeman present whether he had ordered the firing. I stepped forward and asked the European officer whether he had heard the rifle fire. He impatiently answered that he was enquiring about it. I found afterwards that the officer was Mr. P. L. Orde of the C. I. D. Police.

I left with the people. A Goorkha came near me brandishing his Khukri right and left. He was literally laughed out and left crestfallen. An armoured car was rattling away encircling us with the gun constantly pointed at us, but nobody was either cowed down or impatient. The crowd left for their several homes after taking affectionate leave of me.

VIII

REAL SATYAGRAHA SPIRIT

THE whole of Sunday (30th March) night was passed by me without a wink of sleep. The dead body of a Muslim Martyr was somehow obtained by the Billi Maran Brethren and was placed in a mosque. The authorities, getting scent of the fact, made repeated raids on the mosque threatening to shoot the mourners if the dead body was not delivered. Intelligence of this and other occurrences was hourly coming to me and I all along advised the people to remain firm. At last the authorities gave up their game of bluff. The Janaza (tabut bier) of the martyr was followed by thousands. The bier of another Muslim Martyr met us on the way and both were taken to the burial ground accompanied by not less than thirty-five thousand, Musalmans and Hindus. Our rear was brought up by armoured cars which rattled to the very graveyard. Hakim Ajmal Khan and myself met for the first time at the Martyr's feet and from that day we became like brothers to each other. The people kept their temper well and when Hakim Ajmal Khan and I harangued them for self-restraint and asked them to open their shops, they all agreed with one voice. While we were thinking of getting the shops opened in the afternoon the dead bodies of some of those massacred and wounded at the Railway Station and near the Townhall were recovered through the intercession of a deputation

of city-fathers, which waited upon the Chief Commissioner. Out of the dead bodies that were thus recovered two biers went to the graveyard followed by 15,000 men among whom Hindus predominated and three went to the Hindu Cremation ground followed by some thirty thousand among whom there was a predominance of Musalmans. I was compelled by the Musalman leaders to go with the Hindu biers and several of them accompanied me to the cremation grounds. The sight was wonderful! The Muslim biers went mainly carried on Hindu shoulders and the Hindu biers were supported by Muslim shoulders. And the beauty of it was that none of the bier carriers afterwards repented or apologised for having given shoulder (Khandha diya) to a Kafir's Janaza or to a Mlecha's Arthi. As the Janaza was stopped in the morning for prayers for dead and some Mullahs asked me and other Hindus to turn our faces away from them, the Imam with us came running and stopped them saying :—'Swamiji! we are all god's people. We want you to join our prayers'; and I did join them with all my heart.

So far Satyagraha reigned supreme. Although the relations of the dead were in great grief and all people were in mourning, there was no sign of hostility or violence towards the Government. On the cremation ground I exhorted the people to open their shops and begin business from the next morning. I had not tasted any food or drink since the morning and was thinking of doing so when I was again wanted at Dr. Abdur Rahman's for consultation. Dr. M. A. Ansari was still absent from Delhi and some President was required for taking exe-

cutive responsibilities in order to face the Government and to lead the people ; so in the absence of Dr. Ansari, I agreed to act as President and when Dr. Ansari came back on the 1st of April, he insisted on my remaining President of the local Satyagrah Sabha.

On Tuesday (1st April 1919) morning I reached the Clock-Tower rather early. Some 2,000 persons assembled within five minutes and I exhorted them to go and open their shops. They were about to leave when some of them pointed towards the Town-Hall where the Military were being provokingly displayed and strong Police guards stationed at both the gates of the Municipal Gardens, facing the Chandni Chowk. By this time Hakim Ajmal Khan had also arrived and the crowd had increased to 5,000. Hakim Sahab and I asked the Sentries to unlock one of the doors and going in asked Mr. P. L. Orde, the C. I. D. Police Superintendent, to take away the Military out of sight so that we might feel no difficulty in having the shops opened. Mr. Orde said he would consult the Deputy Commissioner and went on the phone. He returned after a short while and ordered the Military to go out of sight. After thanking Mr. Orde, we left.

All the leaders of the people now made a round of the City and by 12 noon all the shops (even in the remotest parts) were opened and business was resumed. While I was returning from the Suiwala Bazar, after having the last shop opened, I got intelligence that the Military and the Police were again in evidence near the Clock-Tower Bazar. I hastened to the place alone and found a posse of armed police, some Cavalry and Infan-

try in the Chowk with the Military Commanding Officer on horseback and Mr. Orde on foot.

I asked Mr. Orde the meaning of this and he replied that, as the leaders had not succeeded in getting the shops opened and as a great crowd had assembled, he was obliged to requisition the Military and the armed Police. I asked the people why they were there and their reply was that they were simply attracted by the sight of the Military and that all the shops had remained open but when the Military came some of the shops closed again for very fear. I asked Mr. Orde to move away with the Military and the Police and I would be responsible for the crowd. I also said that if the Military remained provokingly in sight he would be responsible for any disturbance that occurred. Mr. Orde at once complied with my request and the whole crowd dispersed within ten minutes.

At 1 p.m. I took a glass of water and again motored round the whole city. Business was going on and people appeared calm. I was returning to my place when intelligence reached me that the Viceregal special had arrived at 3 p.m. and that the local authorities were having a talk with the Viceroy at the Delhi Junction Railway Station. No conveyance being available I walked to the Railway Station but the Viceroy's special had left before I reached there. I had gone with a view to request the Viceroy to get down and pay a visit to the wounded in the General Hospital which would ease the situation, but that was not to be. I was sadly disappointed but was reassured a little by the news that His Excellency ordered a Non-official Committee of inquiry to go into the whole

affair. My astonishment and consequent disappointment was complete when subsequently the Viceregal Communique reproduced the one-sided report of the local authorities verbatim.

I returned to my ashram at about 7 p.m. and took my food about 8 p.m. Then for full three hours consultations went on and applications for deciding cases, as sole arbitrator, were received. At 11 p.m. I went to bed and getting up at 2-30 a.m. I went through my daily morning programme up to 5 a.m. and immediately after left for the city. This remained my programme of work till the 19th of April, 1919, on which day the Hartal finally came to an end. One sherbat or water drink after noon and one meal at eight in the night was the order of the day. And on Sundays I kept up my 24 hours' fast till the Rowlatt Act was repealed. The 2nd and 3rd of April passed smoothly, except for a remark of Colonel Beadon, Deputy Commissioner of Delhi, which went round, purporting to express regret that those who ought to have been shot were roaming freely. The allusion was to myself and my Satyagrahi colleagues. There was one result of the fraternization of Hindus and Muslims. Thefts and affrays were at an end, drunkards fought shy of grogshops, and even gambling dens were deserted. For full twenty days it appeared that Ramraj had set in. Two intricate civil cases had been pending for five years. Hakeem Sahab referred the cases to my sole arbitration. In one case Hindus were opposed to Muslims. The enquiry was simple enough. I went to the parties' Mohallah ; both spoke out the truth and signed a compromise deed dictated by me. The decree was executed

at once without having recourse to the British Law Courts. There was a disturbance in Kangri Bazar. I referred the matter to Lala Bulaqui Das. The offending party, although high caste men, apologised and paid something to the Satyagrah funds and a report was sent to me. I do not know exactly how many cases were finally decided by Hakeem Ajmal Khan saheb, but I remember having decided more than two dozen cases which would have dragged on in the British Courts for years.

The Hindu-Muslim fraternization was something wonderful. All doubts and suspicions were set at rest. A typical case will illustrate my meaning. A Hindu trader was walking with five-rupee currency notes in his pocket. One such note was invitingly exposed. A fourteen-year old Muslim boy in passing, put his fingers on the note and took it away. The sentry on duty arrested him and took him running to the Hindu—"Sir, the rascal took this note from your pocket." The Lala looked at the lad with compassion and taking out his bundle of notes, deliberately counted them and said that his notes were complete. The Lala insisted on the boy being released. When the Lala turned to another lane, the poor boy placed the note in his hands, fell at his feet, and blurted out—"Sir ! my old mother and my little sister had nothing to eat since two days and I am out of employment on account of the Hartal. This led me into temptation. Sir, pardon me." The Hindu trader, who perhaps never suffered from a twinge of conscience before, was overpowered—"My son ! this note belongs to you. Come with me and I will give you some present for your mother." The boy was taken to the Hindu's house and

got some flour, ghee and dal with which he brought consolation to a disconsolate house. This occurred on 12th of April when Hartal was in full swing and the whole story was related to me by Bashir himself. Goondas had ceased to exist ; every Hindu woman was treated like his own mother, sister or daughter, by every Musalman and vice versa. O ! for a week of that old spirit to dominate Delhi, so that a reaction against the present unholy spirit might begin and permeate the whole of India.

IX

ENTRY INTO JUMMA MASJID

THE 4th of April was a red letter day in Delhi. It was the first Friday after the indiscriminate shooting and congregational prayers were to be offered in the great Jumma Masjid. A notice had been sent round by responsible Musalmans inviting the public to join the Memorial Meeting called for invoking God's blessings on the Hindu-Muslim Martyrs.

As usual I was making a round of the City when scores of Hindu gentlemen told me that our Musalman brethren insisted on the Hindus going inside the Masjid and joining the Memorial Meeting and asked my advice as to the course they should adopt. The reason of the enquiry was this. Non-Muslims had no right of entry into the great mosque without the sanction of the Mosque Managing Committee, especially when *namaz* was going on. I asked them to wait and went to consult Mr. Abdul Rahman Vakeel whose office was close by. Mr. Abdur Rahman advised me not to go without consulting Hakeem Saheb. As Hakeem Saheb was not at home, I returned to my ashram determined not to go out till Namaz and memorial service was to be over by two o'clock.

I was busy writing when by 1 p.m. about fifty Musalman gentlemen boarded my humble lodgings and lovingly forced me down. A tonga was waiting. In the

way they requisitioned several conveyances one faster than the other till an empty motor car was found. I was then hurried on and reached the southern steps of the Jumma Masjid. I saw some people about to come down but when they saw me ascending the steps shouts of "Mahatma Gandhi ki Jaya" and "Hindu-Musalman ki Jaya" went forth and all of them turned back. The gathering inside could not be less than thirty thousand. I was going to sit behind the last man when other Musalman brethren came running and took me inside the buildings and then outside, where a permanent wooden pulpit stood for the preachers' use. Maulvie Abdul Majeed was addressing the audience. He stopped waiting for me to go up. I hesitated. A hundred voices urged me to go up. After ascending two steps I again hesitated. The huge audience was up on its legs and with one voice called upon me to go up. When I reached the pulpit, they sat down.

I expected Maulvie Abdul Majeed to go on with his sermon. But he stopped with the remark : 'You have heard what the Quran Majeed says about the blood of the Martyrs. Swami Shraddhanand will now tell you that the Holy Veda, which is believed to be the revelation according to our Hindu brethren, inculcates the same teachings." It was a sudden call. I had to stand up. I recited the Vedic verse which inculcated the Fatherhood and the Motherhood of God.

त्वं हि नः पिता वसो त्वं माता शतक्रतो बभूविथः। अधाते सम्नमीमहे।

I called upon the huge audience to bear testimony to the innocence of the martyrs and ended with calling upon

them to fall at the feet of Him who was the Father and the Mother of all. I recited the following from the Urdu poet :—

"Hindu ne sanam men jalwa paya tera,
Atish pai fighan ne ras gaya tera.
Dehri ne kiya dehr se tabir tujhe,
Inkar kisi se ban na aya tera."

Those, who were present, can well describe the scene. And when I thrice repeated, "Om shanti, Ameen!" and the whole audience followed me with one reverberating voice, it was an inspiring spectacle. I came down and left with the audience whose faces showed how impressed they were.

This was followed by Hindu Sadhus addressing from Muslim pulpits in Masjids and Musalman divines addressing mixed audiences in Hindu Temples, in all parts of the country. In spite of all that has occurred after that grand scene I am still impressed with its memory and am living in the hope that clouds of doubt will disappear and the bright light of the sun of Faith and Truth will shine forth again with all its splendour.

Inside this beautiful scene was being acted and outside the great mosque the armoured cars and the Military and the Police were provokingly in evidence. But the people, exhorted by their leaders, kept their temper admirably.

The same evening, Lt. Colonel Beadon, the Deputy Commissioner, called a meeting of the Government officials and the Raises of the city and read out his memorable printed notice to the public dated 2nd April in which

he called the crowd which had assembled on the Railway station as a mob of Badmashes. In the evening the same printed notice was posted at different parts of the city and there was great commotion. Then Lt. Col. Beadon published a notice calling upon the relations of the killed and the wounded to go and lay their grievances before him at the Townhall. But people had lost all faith in his justice and nobody responded to the call. The local Satyagraha Sabha drafted a reply to Lt. Col. Beadon's incorrect statement and issued a counter-notice which was distributed on the morning of April 6th, 1919. This reply of the Satyagraha Sabha will show that as we, in Delhi, had already celebrated the day of humiliation and prayer on March 30th, we proposed simply to hold a protest meeting in the evening and had no intention of calling upon the people to close their business on April 6, 1919, which as announced by Mahatma Gandhi was to be observed as a day of humiliation and prayer throughout India. The local Satyagrah Sabha passed a resolution and posted big posters to that effect in the city.

It is necessary at this place to emphasize that the work of calming the perturbed minds of the people by the office bearers of the Satyagrah Sabha and the other Delhi leaders was made difficult by the mischievous actions of the C. I. D. people. On the 31st of March 1919 while Hakeem Ajmal Khan, Mr. K. A. Desai, I and others were trying to get shops opened, two or three men were found haranguing people not to open shops until the dead bodies were restored. One of them was recognised by Mr. Desai to be a C. I. D. man and Mr. Desai ran to catch him. But the man disappeared amongst the

crowd. Again on the 1st of April while I with R. B. Sultan Singh got shops on one line from Fatehpuri to the Clock-Tower opened, we saw a crowd being addressed by somebody behind us. We turned back and standing on R. B. Lala Sultan Singh's carriage, I asked the man (a Muhammadan) what his object was. In a tone which appeared to me to be affected, he said "How can you understand the feelings of those who have had their relations killed? If any relation of yours had been killed you would never have advised the ending of the Hartal." I asked him point blank: "What relation of yours has been killed?" The man appeared to be nonplussed and just at that moment one of the assembled hundreds recognised him as a member of the C. I. D. No sooner was the remark made than the man disappeared as if the earth had swallowed him. Then on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of April hand-written posters appeared on the wall of the clock-tower inciting people to murder the Kotwal. This was also considered to be the work either of the C. I. D. or of the police and the same view appeared in the Indian dailies. Moreover, during all this time several persons, whom I afterwards found to be C. I. D. men, used to come to me at different times and to submit schemes of violence and I had to speak for hours to convert them to the Satyagrah principles of non-violence and self-suffering.

Such was the condition of affairs when the sun rose on Sunday, the 6th April, and people saw with surprise another complete Hartal. All business was literally stopped. In the morning thousands assembled in the Fatehpuri mosque to pray for the souls of the dead. I had

again to conduct the prayers. At noon some fifteen to twenty thousand assembled in the Edward Park. Almost all the Delhi leaders were present, and there were lectures on satyagrah and swadeshi, and people were exhorted to restrain themselves and not to feel any resentment. In the evening there was a huge gathering in Dr. Ansari's compound in Daryaganj. More than a lakh of people assembled and there were some eight overflow meetings. Not a single Lathi was in evidence and the proceedings came to an end peacefully and calmly. No police or military was in evidence near the meeting place and, therefore, no cause for irritation.

The people of Delhi had been pressing me to ask Mahatma Gandhi to come and give Darshan to the thousands who had learnt a new spiritual lesson from him. As I heard that Mahatmaji was going on tour to the Punjab and Sindh, I wired to him to break journey at Delhi. I did this because I was certain that Mahatma Gandhi's personal contact with the people would make our task of infusing the principles of Satyagrah into them easy. Mahatmaji wired saying that he could leave Bombay on Tuesday evening. I wired back saying that we were thankful for his telegram and then the following telegram was received by me from him on April 8th, 1919—"Reaching tomorrow evening. Please keep my arrival strictly private; can bear no public demonstration." I showed this telegram to the other office-holders of the Satyagraha Sabha alone and did not think it advisable to inform the general public as any public demonstration would have told upon the health of Mahatmaji.

The police and the military were, however, in full display and Lancers began to patrol the city from 7-30 p.m. more than two hours before the time of arrival of the train. When I, with some other friends, reached the Delhi Junction Railway Station the several platforms were brimming over with the C. I. D. people and the issue of platform tickets was stopped. The train was late in coming because of Mahatma Gandhi's arrest at Palwal. When, however, the train steamed in the station, the European travellers, seeing us awaiting Mahatmaji's arrival, waved their hands exultingly and spoke only one word " arrested !" Then Mr. Mahadeva Desai, Mahatmaji's Secretary, came out and confirmed the news saying that he had Mahatma Gandhi's message to deliver to us.

Mr. Mahadeva Desai wrote out Mahatma Gandhi's " message to my countrymen " and we got it typed in the night in my ashram. It was sent round to the papers. On the morning of April 10th there was again a complete Hartal. As there was no time for circulating notices, I left my lodging at about 7-30 in the morning. People assembled in large numbers in the way and the news spread within half an hour that Mahatma Gandhi's message was to be read on the banks of the Jumna to the assembled people. At 9 a.m. about twenty thousand people (ladies and gentlemen) had reached the place of the meeting. The message, which is now a classical document, was read and explained by me and prayers were offered to the Almighty for his long life and the success of the Satyagrah.

In the evening there was another huge gathering numbering about seventy thousand people. The principal

resolution, put forward, said :—'This mass meeting of the citizens of Delhi calls upon every Indian to do his duty by his country and following the noble and inspiring example set by Mahatma Gandhi at Palwal, seek the withdrawal of the Rowlatt legislation or his own imprisonment.'

When the resolution was about to be put to the vote, a strange incident occurred. A man who was standing at the farthest corner of the audience said in a shrill, piercing voice, "Stop : what are you doing? At Palwal 300 goras (British Soldiers) have been killed and a thousand Jats with Lathis are bringing Gandhiji here. How dare you pass this resolution?" The audience was thunderstruck and the chairman was at a loss what to do. I at once got up and said loudly : "I have definite information that Gandhiji was taken to Mathura last night and his carriage was attached to the Bombay Mail this morning. This appears to be a C. I. D. man, do detain him." But the man disappeared. Suspicions about his being a C. I. D. man were confirmed because at least one Inspector, two Deputy Inspectors and a dozen other C. I. D. men were present and nobody tried to arrest the man who was spreading such horribly untrue rumours.

X

BARRON SAVES SITUATION

IT was after his arrest at Palwal that Mahatma Gandhi thought of suggesting a pledge of swadeshi for the Indians. It ran as follows :—"With God as witness I pledge to use only cloth prepared from cotton, silk and wool of Indian produce, in future and avoid by all means foreign cotton, silk and wool cloth. I promise to burn all foreign cloth with me." At the cremation grounds, on the morning of 10th April, 1926, the above pledge was taken by hundreds. The Hartal continued on 11th and 12th of April ; whenever we tried to get the shops opened the people were ready with the reply that they would not end the Hartal until Gandhiji was set free. On the morning of 12th April I received the following wire which left Bombay on the evening of 11th April :—

"Just arrived and discharged from custody. Must seek rearrest. Will inform later. Regret loss life some places. Absolutely necessary people restrain themselves and avoid violence. Please repeat this Lahore, Amritsar etc. Gandhi." On receiving this telegram I wired the following message to Lala Dunichand at Lahore and to the old Congress-worker, Lala Kanhyalal, at Amritsar :—"Just received wire from Bombay Mahatma Gandhi released. He regrets loss of life ; counsels restraint and avoiding violence. I, too, strongly urge calm restraint, will wire further particulars when received. God and

Truth guide you." The above telegrams need some explanation. The majority of those who took the pledge of Stayagraha in the Punjab were Arya Samajists, and they joined the movement on account of my taking the lead there. So it was on me that they mostly depended for initiative and instructions. At Lahore Lala Dunichand and other leaders were still free but at Amritsar Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew had been spirited away to an unknown destination. Hence there was no resource left for me but to convey Mahatma Gandhi's message to the old Congress leader Lala Kanhaya Lal. Both of my telegrams were intercepted as I afterwards found. But the Amritsar telegram gave C. I. D. people the cue to entrap unwary innocent people in the Jalianwalla Bagh massacre. A C. I. D. man announced with beat of an empty canister that Lala Kanhiaya Lal would deliver a lecture in the Jalianwalla Bagh. Hundreds of gentlemen, who would have otherwise kept at home, walked to the Jalianwala Bagh to hear the patriot who had not spoken publicly for over a dozen years. And several of them were caught in the firing of bloody Dyer and were roasted alive. This by the way. Armed with Gandhiji's telegram I gave public notice in the local newspapers and called upon the people to end the Hartal. I was expecting to hear from Bombay that Gandhiji had again started for Delhi, but I was disagreeably surprised on the evening of the 13th when I learnt that Mahatmaji had ordered the suspension of all Satyagrah activities and had gone on hunger strike as Satyagraha against his own people.

Postponing my comments on this strange procedure

on the part of Mahatma Gandhi, I, with leaders of the people, went round the city exhorting the people to end the Hartal. We had induced some of the owners to open their shops when Lt. Col. Beadon came on horseback with a strong guard and on seeing him all the shops closed again. A meeting was, however, held in the evening when I exhorted about thirty-five thousand people (assembled in meeting) to obey Mahatma Gandhi and to restore normal conditions the next day. A single resolution was passed that day, a copy of which was wired to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy at Simla. "Citizens of Delhi passed following resolution at mass meeting held this evening. This Mass meeting of citizens of Delhi protests against investigation instituted by Delhi Executive of incidents of March 30th on ground that being party to destruction of lives of harmless people and wounding of innocent citizens they cannot by any principle of justice and equity be allowed to sit as judges on their own actions. Meeting, however, invites Imperial Government to depute few officials from outside Delhi Province in order to co-operate with non-official commission appointed by people of Delhi for investigation of causes that led to tragedy."

While we were assembled in meeting, news spread like wild fire that the Delhi leaders were about to be arrested, that they had been called by the Deputy Commissioner ostensibly for holding consultation but in reality for being spirited away to some unknown destination. When I entered the motor car with Dr. Ansari and Lala Pyare Lal, people rushed and stopped the car and began to shout :—"Please do not go to Colonel Beadon. You will

be arrested. If you go, allow us to accompany you." I knew nothing about any such meeting having been called and assured them that I was not going. On my giving repeated assurances they left us and the motor car flew towards Kashmere gate. In the way Dr. Ansari and Lala Pyare Lal informed me that they had been really called by Colonel Beadon and that there was no time to lose. I compelled them to drop me at my lodging before they proceeded to Colonel Beadon's place.

From the very morning of 14th April 1919, Lathis began to appear. At noon, the Chief Commissioner called a meeting of local leaders and they all went to the Townhall. I heard that men with Lathis were going to the Townhall. Between 3 and 4 in the afternoon one man in a Tonga and another on foot went running towards the Sadar Bazar crying that Swamiji (meaning me) had been taken to the Railway Station and a special train was waiting to take him to an unknown destination. Some hundreds of the Sadar people armed themselves with Lathis and were running towards the railway station when they learnt that I was at home. Then thousands came running and boarded my humble lodging and I had to show myself to all by going downstairs before they could trust that all was right.

In the meanwhile Hakeem Ajmal Khan and other leaders had returned from the Town Hall and after seeing them safe at Hakeem Saheb's place the people went and held a meeting in the Edward Park, where Faquir Mohammed, a C. I. D. Inspector and a Head Constable were assaulted but were saved by Satyagrahis.

At 6 p.m. in the night on that very date I received

a letter from the Deputy Commissioner asking me to join the Conference at the Townhall next morning.

On the 15th of April, Hakeem Saheb and I made a tour of the city and after trying to induce the butchers to open shops we reached the Townhall after 10 and saw all the other leaders there. The Chief Commissioner with the Deputy Commissioner and police and military were also there. As I went in, shouts of "Gandhiji ki jai" "Hindu Musalman ki jai" were raised outside on the Chandni Chowk Road. I was asked by the authorities to go and calm the people. I went out and asked them to be quiet and they at once became silent. But there was again a stir and the reason was plain.

I looked behind and saw Colonel Beadon coming out. I exhorted the people to keep quiet and took Colonel Beadon in. I noticed at that time that Lathis were becoming more prominent in the crowd. After an hour's consultation it was resolved, that the Chaudries and other prominent men from the city should also be called for final decision at 4 p.m. that day.

Hakeem Ajmal Khan and I induced the butchers to commence business about 4 p.m. and when we reached the Townhall we saw about fifty citizens in consultation with the Chief Commissioner and other officials. On the road in front of Queen Victoria's statue some 15 to 20 thousand people were standing, out of whom more than one half had Lathis in their hands. On the Railway road side also about 3 to 4 thousand were assembled. The people were telling me plainly that they were to guard their leaders and if any thing went wrong they would lay their lives to defend them (the leaders).

I tried to calm them and told them that they were mistaken. They told me in reply that I was mistaken and not they, but promised to obey me in keeping quiet.

I found the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Scott of the Police, and the military officers all very nervous. But the reason of the excitement of the people was plain. One room of the Townhall was full of armed British soldiers, more than a dozen military officers, armed Cap-a-pie, revolvers in hand, were sitting in the conference, one machine gun was mounted on the highest roof of the Hall, and to crown all, an aeroplane was flying over the city. It was rumoured that the aeroplane would suddenly alight over the Town Hall roof and would take away the leaders to an unknown destination. Therefore as in the morning so in the evening of April 15th the people shouted "Gandhiji ki jai" "Hindu-Musalman ki jai" every time that the aeroplane came over their heads."

Every official appeared to be excited but there was one calm figure and that was the Honourable Mr. Barron, Chief Commissioner of Delhi. No sooner he learnt from the people's representatives, that the Hartal on April 10th commenced in order to show grief at the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi and that it was continued because the people feared that their leaders would be harmed, he at once rose to the occasion and wrote out his memorable proclamation, ten thousand copies of the Hindustani translation of which were distributed the next morning. It was a memorable occasion. If the head of the province had lost his head at that time, the result would have been disastrous. There is no exaggeration in saying that Mr. Barron alone saved the situation that day.

Let me here divulge the secret that it was the way in which Mr. Barron took us (myself, Hakeem Saheb and Dr. Ansari) into confidence that led to the subsequent saving of Delhi from the worst form of Martial Law. Mr. Barron showed to me in confidence the instructions of the Viceroy in which every power was offered to the Chief Commissioner. The details were too shocking and horrible to be given here. Mr. Barron said to me--- "Swamiji ! I do not want a further drop of blood to be spilt in the Capital of India." I replied—"Mr. Barron ! believe me, my faith bids me to avoid bloodshed at all times ; but the Delhi people are at this moment, my special wards." Mr. Barron said—"It was in this very belief that I invited you especially to this meeting."

As the proclamation was being translated by Dr. Ansari, with the help of Hakeem Saheb, the crowd on both sides of the Municipal Gardens was getting impatient. At the request of the District Magistrate and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, I went out and calmed the people and with the approval of the Chief Commissioner got the curtains rolled up which calmed the people at once.

XI

SAD DEVELOPMENT

MR. Barron's proclamation read as follows :—

" It was stated in the meeting of 15th April 1919, in which the Chief Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner and other officers together with representatives of different trades and leaders of society were present, that one of the causes of the continuation of *hartal* was that it was the intention of the authorities to harm the leaders with whom they were conferring. There is no need of proclaiming that this is baseless and the Chief Commissioner hopes that people will trust him.

It is also announced that the slaughter house opened this evening and the citizens should open their shops according to their promises.

(NOTE—The Delhites did not like to open shops until the butchers had ended the strike.)

The Chief Commissioner promises to inform the Government of India that the *hartal* continued on account of the orders of externment against Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi has wired that he is free and healthy at Ahmedabad."

It was growing dark and the crowd outside was becoming impatient when Mr. Barron put the draft proclamation in my hand. I at once went out and, without waiting for the door of the Queen's Garden to be opened, jumped over the railing and was at once encircled by a

surging crowd of more than twenty thousand. At that time every man appeared to be carrying a Lathi. I told them to follow me to Dr. Ansari's compound (far away in the farthest corner of the city) and left on foot. The people were so much excited that they began to beat with their Lathis the wired drums for holding sweepings of the bazar and electric globes. I at once stopped and said in a loud voice "I will not go with you. Allow me to leave back. You promised non-violence to person and property and to fight with spiritual weapons alone and here you are breaking your vow." The vast crowd became silent for a moment and then all Lathis came down and a shout went forth "we admit our fault. We will not use carnal weapons, we will not; it is the spiritual force alone which we will use" and then they walked more than half a mile to the place of meeting, without any further mischief. There was a gathering of some fifty thousand people and I read out and explained the proclamation. Dr. Ansari spoke it through gramophone so that every word of it was heard by that huge audience. Then we dispersed.

The scene of the evening of 15th April was an eye-opener to me. Lathis were coming more and more in evidence and all sorts of skilled and common labourers were becoming vagabonds for want of work. On 14th April more than two scores of *Sirki walas* came and complained that for want of work they were starving. Hakeem Saheb sent them to me and I silenced them for the time being by distributing some money among them. They and others again came on the morning of 16th and when I wanted to distribute any dole they refused to take

anything and said—"Swami Maharaj ! try to end the *hartal* soon, otherwise we will be obliged to commit robbery in order to maintain ourselves." This was really a very dangerous idea but there was no help for it.

Then about fifty most respectable people in Government service, who had come to join our movement between the 1st and 5th of April and whom I had sent away to think over the matter seriously for 15 days before they took the irretrievable step, had come back and I had to explain the real situation to them. In this way they were saved from a worldly point of view. And to crown all Mahatma Gandhi, at the time of going on the hunger strike against his own countrymen, had written plainly that there was "some clever man or men behind" the disturbances at Viramgam, Ahmedabad and other places and this sentence began to be quoted even by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State in proof of the fact that the Satyagrah movement had Bolshevist brains and money behind it. The Delhi Satyagrahis had sent a remonstrance to Gandhiji through a very reliable and able member who discussed the matter personally with Mahatmaji at Sabarmati but the reply we received was not at all satisfactory.

Such was the state of affairs when on the morning of 16th April all the leaders became busy in getting the shops at the Chandni Chowk opened. The work had hardly proceeded through half the Chandni Chowk when suddenly Col. Beadon, with Mr. Scott of the police and a strong Guard again came riding from the clock-tower to the Fatehpuri side. That was the signal for all the shops to close again. We tried our best to persuade peo-

ple to end the Hartal, but the people said, "The man who calls us Badmashes will say that he succeeded in ending the Hartal. He will not compel us to do so." After trying till noon, we gave up the attempt for that day and met in consultation at Hakeem Ajmal Khan's house.

At about 3 p.m. intelligence reached us that all the additional police picquets were being withdrawn from the city and that even half of the ordinary police was being sent away. The people rose equal to the occasion and hundreds of volunteers came forward to guard the city and to keep night-watch. There was not a single report of an offence that night.

During half the night of April 16th the peoples' representatives sat in consultation because response had to be made to Mr. Barron's sympathetic attitude. I could not join the night meeting as full 16 days' abnormal pressure had told on my health. After 12 o'clock in the night Hakeem Ajmal Khan, Rai Bahadur Sultan Singh and Dr. Ansari came to my lodging and woke me up. They told me that the Deputy Commissioner (Col. Beadon) had phoned offering us the help of the police for the next morning and asked my advice about it. I told them in reply that if the police interfered, I would have nothing to do with the opening of the shops and would not join in their work on April 17th. They promised to phone to Col. Beadon my opinion and promised that they would send conveyance for me only if police help was not to be taken.

The next day, in spite of opposition from some misguided people, we succeeded in having all business places

opened by noon. But in flat contradiction of his promise, at 11 a.m., the Deputy Commissioner sent dozens of parties of policemen with big bludgeons who began parading the streets. We telephoned the District Magistrate and the Police Superintendent to call away the police and to keep them back for two hours but all to no purpose. However, having got the last shops opened we were returning back when we saw great commotion near the clock-tower. As we approached people shouted :—

"You have ruined us. You are getting the shops opened while our men are being dragged by the police to the Town Hall bleeding from bayonet wounds." I told the crowd to restrain itself, but finding R. B. Sultan Singh and Lala Pearey Lal Motor-Merchant sitting with me, the mob aimed *lathi* blows at them. The driver very boldly stood up and received the blows on his hands while allowing the two leaders to slip by the opposite door. I got down and the crowd collected around me. They were excitedly going on contradicting each other and blaming the leaders and shouting all sorts of threats when I presented my head to them and said—"You will not become calm until you break somebody's head. Now, here is my head for you to break. Do it and then I shall hear you." A deep silence fell and then they cried with one Voice—"We would die for you. We have the fullest confidence in you." Then I got into the car and said—"Now, you all remain here. I am going to the Town Hall and will find out what the matter is." But the crowd exclaimed—"We will not allow you to go there. The devils will kill you and who will guide us then?" The crowd pushed the car with all their strength

and forcibly brought me to Hakeem Ajmal Khan's house. While there I tried three times to speak to the Town Hall by telephone, but nobody replied. Then the sound of firing was heard and I again left for the Town Hall. I had not proceeded more than fifty paces when the wounded were seen being brought by people on their shoulders. I returned back and began receiving wounded bodies. Dr. Hari Shankar was phoned and he came at once and after dressing the wounds took them away.

While I came to Hakim Saheb's house, he himself went with Dr. Ansari to the Town Hall. He asked Colonel Beadon to show the arrested young man (Gauri Shanker aged about 20 years) to them. They said that there were no wounds on his body and asked Colonel Beadon to allow them to take away the boy and by showing the people, that he was not wounded, to calm them. Hakeem saheb told me that as Colonel Beadon thought that the prestige of the Sirkar would suffer, he did not allow it and they were at once startled on hearing the sound of firing.

I at once wired the whole situation that day to the Viceroy, but again no notice was taken of it.

It appeared afterwards that when I was driven to Hakeem Saheb's, a crowd of vagabonds assembled outside the town hall. The police fired a blank volley. The crowd moved towards Fatehpuri. In the way they met a Head Constable in undress who was going home with medicines for his family. The leaderless men fell upon him and left him almost dead. Then they saw the Police Picket at the Billimaran chowk and tried to rush it. The police in pure self defence had to fire. The vagabondage

on this disappeared and about a dozen innocent sightseers were pierced with bullets.

This ended the grand movement which had been beautifully sustained for more than a fortnight in Delhi. The Seditious Meetings Act was applied that very evening to Delhi and all the leaders vanished so that when the sun arose on April 18th not a vestige of a leader could be traced.

XII

RESIGNATION

I HAD been with the wounded up to 12 in the night and when I finished my Sandhya on the morning of 18th April I walked to the general hospital to pay my visit to the wounded, two of whom I had left in a very precarious condition. Both of them were Hindus. One of them died early in the morning. I found the other, a Pahari boy of 14 being nursed by our volunteers. As the corpse could not be obtained for cremation before post mortem after 11 a.m., I made a tour of the city. There was a complete Hartal again but there was no life among the people. The best among them appeared to be demoralised. All the leaders were confined to their innermost apartments and the Muhammadans were openly charging Hindus with pusillanimity. Some of them were reported to have said :—"The Dhoti-parshad Lalas fled leaving the Muslim wounded. One of those Musalmans is dead and no Hindu is dead and no Hindu is visible."

At half past eleven I returned to the Hospital and made arrangements for getting the bier of our departed brother ready. A few Muslims were passing on their way to Jumma Musjid for Friday prayers. When they saw me they were startled. "Are Mian! Shamaji to yahan hain" (Swamiji is here). They came in and apologized. They said "People are telling us that you had abandoned the people. They are liars. You cannot for-

sake us." And when they heard that the dead was a Hindu they fell at my feet. "Swamiji, give us only 1½ hour and we will join you." It took us an hour more to prepare the Arthi. Only some 35 Hindus joined us at the hospital, but when we reached the Jumma Musjid a stream of thousands of Musalmans joined the funeral procession and every Hindu followed us. The Nai Sarak was full of people from end to end. All were bareheaded. Neither the police nor the military dared to interfere.

On the cremation ground about twenty thousand remained up to the end. In clear defiance of the Seditious Meetings Act we held a meeting. Sermons were delivered by several brethren. At the end they asked my opinion as to their further behaviour. I told them that they must not remain leaderless. I had heard that their trust in their old leaders was gone and they must not disperse before electing new leaders. There was a silence of some five minutes and then came a query in chorus—"Do you trust our old leaders?" I replied that my confidence in them was not shaken. With one voice the assembled thousands exclaimed : "We will follow our leaders." Then the question arose as to the ending of the Hartal. I refused to give advice unless they promised to follow it literally. They gave the promise and my advice was given in clear language. "Tomorrow morning at 8 a.m. all the shops should be automatically open. No excuse of Jamna-bath or late puja will be accepted." The pledge was given and we all dispersed.

On the morning of 19th April I came down my house at 8-45 a.m. and found brother C. F. Andrews motoring towards my house. I got into the car and

heard from him that all the preparations for applying martial law were made and if by nine o'clock the shops did not open the military would take possession of the city. We drove slowly so as to reach the Clock-tower exactly at 9. The Khari Baori was open and when we reached the Fatehpuri mosque, the whole of the Chandni Chowk from one end to the other appeared to be engaged in business. It struck nine when we reached the Clock-tower. Mr. Beadon rode through the Town-hall gate on horseback but when he saw the whole of the bazar open, he had to go back and the critical moment had passed. I will not go into the details of how Colonel Beadon wanted to disgrace the local leaders and how through the instrumentality of Brother Andrews, we induced Mr. Barron to interfere, how the families of the Delhi martyrs were supported during the days of their difficulty, how the rumours of further Hartals were contradicted by me, how the innocent in the local cases were helped and rescued and how Delhi escaped the horrors of the Punjab Martial law days. I shall confine myself to giving a few facts relating to my severance of connection with Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagrah. My resignation from that body will not be understood without the knowledge of the following facts.

1. Gandhiji, in his first manifesto calling off Satyagrah for the time being, had laid the responsibility of the peaceful citizens being shot by the Government Military and Police, on the shoulders of the Satyagrahis. The remonstrance of the Delhites had no effect on him and he stuck to his opinion.

2. Lala Shankar Lal had been falsely accused of

abetting the beating given by the public to Faquir Muhammed, C. I. D. Inspector and arrested. Gandhiji wired ordering Shankar Lal to offer no defence and to make a true statement. I wrote back to Gandhiji remonstrating against his interference without knowing the fact. Lala Shankar Lal was not even present at the time and place when and where Faquir Muhammed was assaulted. What did Mahatma Gandhi mean by his making a true statement and not entering upon his defence? The reply came in an envelope giving us the power to defend Lala Shankar Lal under those circumstances. I thought Gandhiji's telegram had prejudiced the court against our work. We defended him; Abhyankar came from Nagpur to cross-examine witnesses and the late Deshbandhu C. R. Das argued the case and our brother was honourably acquitted.

3. Every mail brought posters from Gandhiji ordering Satyagrahis to offer themselves for arrest if the Police wanted them. There were other objectionable posters being received daily. I ordered all these posters to be burnt; and the local Satyagrah Committee disbanded itself as a protest against Mahatma Gandhi's Ukases being issued without consulting anybody.

4. The Police came, strengthened with the authority of Mahatma Gandhi, and asked the Secretaries to supply to them a list of all those who had signed the Satyagrah vow. The Secretaries referred the C. I. D. Deputy Superintendent of Police to me. I told him plainly that our Committee had ceased to exist and that I was not going to furnish any such list to him. When he spoke of

consequences, I sent him about his business by telling him to go and prosecute me.

The rest of the reasons I have already hinted at during the course of the Delhi story.

The result of all this was my resignation dated 2nd May, 1919. It was read in the Satyagrah Committee's meeting at Bombay and led to the resignation of Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas and others and, if I remember aright, kept some others who had gone specially prepared to join the movement, from entering its portals. I reproduce my resignation which will explain everything now :—

Before I took the Satyagrah vow proposed by you in connection with the extraordinary measures—known as the Rowlatt Bills, I was preaching not only the strict practice of Ahimsa (non-violence) and Satya (Truth) but of other virtues also as described in the Yamas and Niyamas. I always laid special stress on the observance of the rules of Brahmacharya (Sexual Purity) and thought it to be the root of all virtue. My idea has been that the practice of Brahmacharya alone can put a stop to the present day struggle in the world. On taking the Satyagrah vow, I sent round through the Press a message to the Satyagrahis in which the practice of Brahmacharya was enjoined as the condition of success.

You know well that I never cared to take part in the current politics, much less did I concern myself with the proposed Montague-Chelmsford scheme of reforms. My opinion has always been that the Indian politicians can never hold their own in round-table conferences with our rulers, who have always been at the head of world

diplomacy for the last thousand years. The only way of obtaining political rights, in my opinion, was to allow our rulers to work out their own scheme of reforms.

But the Rowlatt bills laid the axe at the root of the first principles of human liberty and justice and, therefore, when the call came from you whom I regard to be the embodiment of our ancient spiritual culture, I responded to the call with my whole heart and soul.

One of the Rowlatt bills was passed into law and your command went round for the observance of a day of humiliation and prayer. The whole country responded to your call with a will which will never be surpassed. What occurred after that at Delhi on the 30th of March, 1919, is known all over India. Then you were arrested while on your way to Delhi and the whole country was stirred to its very depths. The consequences of that ill-advised action of the Government are known to all.

I am at one with you in condemning all excesses and atrocities committed at Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Amritsar and Kasur etc. by misguided perverted people. I further express my sense of horror at the burning of public and other buildings, especially that of the Christian Churches at Amritsar and Gujaranwala. The killing of Indian Christian religious men and the unprovoked brutal attacks on ladies has given me the greatest shock, and I hope the Hindus and Muhammadans of Amritsar and other places will make some amends by helping in the rebuilding of the Churches and in showing practical sympathy with the families of our European and Indian brethren who were thus murdered.

But I cannot join with you in your silence about the

wilful provocations which Government officials gave at Delhi and some other places and of the horrors perpetrated in the name of law and order in the Punjab.

If I have not been able to raise my voice against the excesses of the people and the tyrannical doing of Government officials, it is on account of gagging of the Public Press at Delhi at the instance of the Punjab Government and for the indiscriminate censoring of all telegrams and letters which are sent from Delhi.

Now, as regards the occasion of my writing this letter to you. I have the highest regard for your person and your saintly character and it gives me great pain to differ from you on any material point. But if I, conscientiously, differ from you, I would be untrue to myself if I do not speak out and take the consequences.

You have suspended the civil breaking of laws temporarily because in your opinion "a crisis has arisen in the country and it was not suited to the occasion." You, however, hope that "When tranquillity was restored in the country and the people had thoroughly imbibed the true principles of Satyagrah, it would be started again." Now, I am convinced that so long as the present system of Government lasts, there is no hope either of tranquillity being restored in the country or of the people at large being allowed to imbibe practically what you call "the true principles of Satyagrah" through the signing of sympathy on paper. I am, therefore, convinced that under the present conditions in India, the civil breaking of laws, without producing an upheaval among the masses (for which neither you nor any Satyagrahi is morally responsible) is impossible; hence consistently with the

views you hold the time for the civil disobedience of laws other than the Rowlatt Act will never arise in the near future. I am further of opinion that when real tranquillity is restored in India, the Rowlatt Act will have gone out and again no occasion for civil disobedience of laws on its account will arise. The result is that the actual reason of my signing the Satyagrah vow formulated by you having disappeared, I beg your leave to withdraw my name from the Satyagrah Sabha founded by you. As a Sanyasi I will continue my work of preaching and practice of the Eternal Principles of Dharma which include Satya, Ahimsa and Brahmacharya also.

Personally my opinion about the passed Rowlatt Act and the proposed Rowlatt Bill remains unchanged and I will think it to be my Dharmic duty not to obey orders passed under those laws when they come into force.

I will also go on with personal spiritual Sadhana for getting a repeal of those laws. But besides my work of preaching of Dharma, my services will always be at the disposal of my countrymen in the following constructive work :—

1. Indian Unity, bringing Hindus, Mohammadans, Sikhs, Christians etc. on a common platform and the adjustment of their differences by united Panchayats.
2. Popularizing the use of Swadeshi made things.
3. The introduction of Hindustani as a national language and,
4. The development of a national system of education independent of the present Government University system.

XIII

VENUE OF CONGRESS

On the last day when the Hartal came to an end I thought of going to attend the Anniversary of the Gurukula near Hardwar. But the Delhi leaders sat Dharna at my door and did not leave me till I had given up the idea altogether. Col. Beadon had enlisted all the Raises as Special Constables and had ordered them to report their attendance at the nearest police station. All this was set right by Mr. Barron. And then poor Raises, several of them left for Simla, where they thought they would be safe.

Sir Michael O'Dwyer had all along been dinning into the ear of the Viceroy that all the mischief was set afloat in the Punjab by me from Delhi and until I was arrested the unrest in the Punjab would not cease. The Chief Commissioner of Delhi was called to Simla. The Police set afloat the rumour that he had been called to Simla in order to get his orders for arresting me. When Mr. Barron came back, the bazar gupp went round that Mr. Barron had refused to arrest me. As regards this rumour I cannot vouch for its truth. But what transpired further was related to me by one of the party of Delhi Raises who were concerned with it. A Hindu Rai Bahadur, a Muhammadan Khan Bahadur and a leading Hindu Vakeel were called by Sir Charles Cleaveland the then Director of Criminal Investigation Department. He

asked the advice of the trio about my arrest and said, "If it is absolutely necessary to arrest Swami Shraddhanand in the cause of peace and order, what advice would you give?" My erstwhile colleagues said: "If the arrest is required to maintain peace and order, he must be arrested." The Raises came out. But the shrewd lawyer urged that if there was commotion and riot in the city at my arrest, they might perhaps be censured. The triple alliance went back and told Sir Charles that my arrest was necessary but it would be well if I was arrested outside Delhi. The conspiracy naturally came to an end on this.

The Police spread the rumour that my arrest was imminent and the citizens came to offer their services for guarding me. I sent them away with thanks and kept the door of my lodgings ajar day and night to enable the Police to do their duty. Then the Police began to spread the rumour that I was at liberty in Delhi but not allowed to go out. I was watching for an opportunity which came very soon.

Pandit Motilal Nehru had come to preside over our non-official Committee of Inquiry and asked my opinion about the venue of the next session of the Congress. I insisted on their holding the Congress session at Amritsar, if they wanted the people to keep up their spirits. Pandit Nehru told that the President of the year, Pandit M. M. Malaviya, was trying to induce some other Province to come forward with an invitation, and the Working Committee would meet, on 8th June in his Anand Bhavan, to decide the matter. I promised to go meaning to dis-

abuse the minds of the C. I. D. as well as to give a warning to the Congressites at Allahabad.

I left Delhi by the night express on 6th June 1919. Not less than 20 C. I. D. men were on the Railway platform. I bought an Inter class ticket and quietly took my seat in a corner. The C. I. D. people were looking for me in the second class compartment. They were mystified. I had been seen on the Junction station : then had the earth swallowed me ? At last they pestered the railway Babus to check Inter class tickets. Entering the compartment in which I was seated, the Babu began his work. I took pity both on the Babu and the passengers and offered my ticket. I told him not to trouble the others and to go away after taking down the number of my ticket. He did so ; then I was recognized. The result was that a complete seat was left vacant for me, in spite of my protests. My fellow-passengers were thirsty and cold water could not be had. The train left, but when it reached Ghaziabad, a man with a bucket full of water came out bawling : " Where is Swamiji ? I have brought cold water for him." It appeared that the police phoned to Gaziabad officials to watch me. The result was that I and my fellow passengers were served with icecold water. This, by the way.

At Allahabad I strongly urged the Committee not to change the venue of the Congress and I succeeded in my mission. Returning from Allahabad I settled all business connected with Delhi cases and before leaving for the Punjab I held a meeting with the Chief Commissioner's previous sanction, in which Lokmanya's birthday was celebrated and an arbitration consisting of prominent

Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Parsi and Christian representatives was appointed to settle commercial disputes. Hakeem Ajmal Khan Saheb was appointed convener, but he never cared to call any further meeting.

The story of my accepting the Vice-Presidentship of the Allahabad Seva Samiti in order to give relief to the Punjab victims of Martial law, collecting more than a lakh and a quarter and after giving relief to the needy, handing over the balance of about one lakh to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji the President, who made it the nucleus of a permanent Fund for his Samiti, and resigning my place on the Samiti, need not be repeated here. My purpose here is to show how I was pitchforked into politics and the Congress without my heart being in the movement. The position was this. Touring throughout central Punjab I had realized the depth of demoralization to which the brave Punjabi had fallen on account of martial law tyrannical atrocities. If, for fear of consequences, the holding of the Congress session at Amritsar was given up, complete collapse of the whole political movement would follow. So it was absolutely necessary to commence the work of forming a Reception Committee at once. But no Amritsar man had the boldness to come forward with a proposal. A C. I. D. sniffed that something was in the air and at once published a manifesto purporting to have been signed by several prominent citizens of Amritsar protesting against the next session of the Congress being held in Amritsar for the reason that there was danger of breach of peace and seditious talk. That was our opportunity ; several so-called signatories of the manifesto denied having signed it and together

with other prominent citizens signed a counter manifesto calling upon the Punjab people to make the Congress session at Amritsar successful. A Reception Committee was formed, secretaries were nominated, even a Vice-Chairman or two were elected and work began in right earnest. But nobody in brave Punjab could be induced to accept the Chairman's responsibility. It is needless to name all those who refused the honour, but among them were two who had all along been considered dauntless patriots and uncompromising nationalists and had only recently changed colour for fear of a dose of Dyerism under the O'Dwyer regime. The soldiers of politics were there but who was to lead them? The leaders were in Jail expecting sentences of death and transportation. Some of them had already been sentenced. But they were taking things easily. Lalas Harkishan Lal and Dunichand, Doctors Satyapal and Kitchlew, Pandit Rambhaj and others, in full council assembled, passed a resolution formally requesting me to act as Chairman of the Reception Committee. Then on paying a visit to the quarters of capital sentence convicts, the lion-hearted Chaudris Bugga and Ratanchand, scorning to sign petition for mercy where there was no justice, made one last request, namely that I should make the Amritsar Congress a success. I was still undecided and had written to Mahatma Gandhi for advice, because prominent Hindus and Arya-samajists were dissuading me from degrading Sanyas by entering the arena of politics.

It was at such a time of indecision that a deputation of ladies consisting of the better halves of some of the enchained lions came and their spokeswoman gave utter-

ance to one simple sentence—"Father Swamin! We do not regret our husbands' separation because they are martyrs in a noble cause. But their souls will feel satisfied only if the Congress Session at Amritsar is not shelved." And that very evening came Mahatma Gandhi's advice in Hindi, a translation of which I reproduce here:—"Dated Sabarmati, Bhadrapad Shukla 10th samvat 1975 Vik. Bhai saheb! I got your letter. My conviction is that as long as we do not enter into the political field with Dharmic aims, so long will we be unable to succeed in the pure and true amelioration of India. If you become the Chairman of the Reception Committee, you will be able to introduce Dharmic feelings within the Congress; therefore you should accept the Chairmanship of the Reception Committee. This is the only advice I can give you."

This put the finishing stroke and I became the Chairman of the Reception Committee, without having been a member of the Congress.

The very first meeting of the Reception Committee revealed to me the difficulties of my position. I found that several of the selected Secretaries were those on whom rested the suspicion of having sworn away the lives of those with whom they had worked shoulder to shoulder in the Satyagrah days. A few of them tried to put difficulties in my way but by the grace of God and with the help of other office-bearers who were devoted to the cause, we pulled through the uphill work. Then there was the fear of the official intrusiveness. The question of a proper site appeared to be the most difficult. I tried to get over it by renting cultivated land a mile away from the

city. This brought the authorities to their senses and the splendid site was obtained which contributed not a little to the success of the session. So I was now in the thick of the fight and was actually in the Congress.

XIV

ACTUALLY IN THE CONGRESS

FOR good or for evil I became a part and parcel of the Great National Movement. There was another difficulty placed in my way, which was considered to be due to the silent attitude of the authorities. Thousands of delegates were expected from the Bengal, Madras and Bombay Presidencies. They could not live in tents owing to the biting cold of the north. For them Pukka buildings were absolutely necessary. But the Mahant owners of 'Akharas' and Dharmasalas and the Managers of Schools were loth to give the use of their buildings to the victims of martial law atrocities and thus put their life and property in danger. There was also a talk of Tommies and Gurkhas being ready for Amritsar in large numbers. The successor of Sir Michael O'Dwyer was known to me during the days when he was Secretary to the Education Member of the Government of India in Lord Hardinge's time. I saw him, after appointment, and personally invited him to the Congress session telling him that a formal invitation will follow. Sir Edward was a goodhearted though weak man. He asked me not to send a formal invitation to him and said :—"You will naturally criticize the actions of my predecessor. If the criticisms were to be levelled at me I would not care. But I will be putting myself in an awkward position by accepting your invitation." Then he tried to dissuade me from holding

that session at Amritsar. His chief reason for dissuading me was : " People coming from all parts of India will flock to the Jalianwala Bagh and this will excite them." I said in reply that if the authorities did not make a display of the Military and the Police I would be responsible for everything passing smoothly. And I asked him to advise the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar not to put obstacles in our way. Sir Edward very kindly promised to do the needful and he was as good as his word. No new Military force was requisitioned, the men already there were ordered to keep to their barracks, the Police was to make themselves scarce from the city during our big processions and they were not to be seen in and around the Congress Pandal to keep order unless I asked for their help which I never requisitioned. An assurance from the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner followed promising every kind of help.

But another hindrance arose from inside the Congress itself. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was the President of the Congress Committee that year, having presided over the Delhi session in December 1918. He set his face against the session being held at Amritsar for a very good reason. The Hunter Committee had arrived to hold an enquiry about the so-called rebellion in the Punjab and the consequent martial law doings. All the political leaders—Das, Nehru, Malaviya and others—were themselves engaged in the Congress enquiry into the Punjab disturbances, and the task of leading the defence before the Hunter Committee also rested upon them. How, then, could an inexperienced man like me make the Session a success without their advice and help ? I was

at Amritsar and the leaders were at Lahore. I was firmly of opinion that if the session was held at Amritsar and that too during the usual last week of December, the situation would be saved, otherwise political activities would be at an end for the coming fifty years at least. I sent brother C. F. Andrews to bring round Malaviyaji to my point of view. Malaviyaji was going to Benares on some University business and Andrews wired to me to see him at the Amritsar Railway Station. I was there awaiting their arrival. On coming out of the compartment, Andrews told me that he had failed to persuade Malaviyaji to give way to my view. I, then, had a straight talk with Malaviyaji and his only objection being about the inability of the leaders to give help to me, I undertook the whole responsibility on myself. As the Scottish proverb goes : " A wilfu ' man maun ha'e his way." I was left free to act. The result is known far and wide. There remains only one incident about my difficulties before the Amritsar session began. The Pandal was to be a huge thing, the contractor began actual work only a fortnight or so before the Christmas Day and extraordinary rains set in after a week's work. Thrice was the excavated pit filled up with rain water and all the three times it had to be pumped out by machine. And when the dome was finally fixed up and about a dozen special trains were expected on 24th December, there was a downpour the like of which had not been experienced for the last two scores of years. The Punjab and the U. P. delegates who had already arrived and were located in tents, were standing up to their knees in water with everything drenched and I, myself, was working

with my feet and half a leg in water. I sent for Motor cars and lorries a day earlier and began to hunt for lodging. I can never forget the splendid response of Amritsar. Three big buildings were at once placed at my disposal which were sufficient to accommodate all the guests in the camp. Then those that came in specials filled up other buildings. But the cry was—"still they come"; some of the buildings lent to us were still not ready, it was raining cats and dogs and intelligence came from the Railway Station that it was full of Congress delegates; even the portico was full of them. It was then that a Godsent phenomenon occurred. I was motoring, completely drenched, when a gentleman came running and bawled out :—"Nobody hears me, Swamiji kindly hear me." I stopped and the messenger of love and sympathy said—"I am ready to accommodate fifty delegates in my house. There are dozens of others who are prepared to do so. Send our brother delegates to our homes." I said in reply—"Brother dear! Go to the Hall Gate and stop every would be host. When the delegates come, let every host guide his own guests to his house." The messenger of God left for Hall Gate; I flew in the cars through roads and streets and lanes calling upon the inhabitants of the city of gurus to go to this Hall-gate to play the host. The result was that by 2 o'clock in the morning not a single delegate remained uncared for. And at the Railway Station, it was our meek and unostentatious leader, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who remained working like a horse oblivious of the natural calls of hunger and thirst even and did not leave the Railway Station until our last guest had left for his place of destination.

I learnt to love Malaviyaji more and more during my connection with him in the Punjab and to admire his splendid spirit of tolerance and discipline.

Let me give an example, only one example—here. The Hunter Committee was at Lahore. The Punjab Government had not agreed to release the detained leaders for the days of enquiry. Mahatma Gandhi insisted that as one of the conditions of our conducting the defence was not complied with, we ought not to lead the defence. But the Punjab leaders outside the jail and, in deference to their opinion those who had come from outside led by Pandit M. M. Malaviya, the President of the Congress Committee, were all for leading the defence. This issue being decided against Mahatma Gandhi, he dictated two letters one for the Punjab Government and the other for the Press telling plainly that he was against leading the defence, his presence would do no good and he would leave the Punjab at once. These drafts were in the hands of brother Andrews and he was taking them to Malaviyaji at Lala Harkishan Lal's when I arrived there from Amritsar. Andrews gave me the drafts and I was astonished on reading them. By this open split with Gandhiji the prestige of the defence Committee would not remain worth a pie. I went in and found that Lala Giridhari Lal was being phoned at Amritsar to be with the Hunter Committee at the time of their inspection of the Jallianwala bagh and other sites of the Disorders day's occurrence. I stopped Jivanlal (L. Harkishanlal's son) at once and told him to phone to Lala Giridharilal to come to Lahore by the next train. I expostulated with Panditji and induced him to call a meeting that afternoon for

revising their previous decision as to the leading of evidence before the Hunter Committee.

The Committee met at the place where Gandhi was putting up. But before it met I convinced Pandit Nehru and Mr. C. R. Das that the leading of evidence would tell against us. I need not enter into the arguments I urged and the facts which I placed before them. Suffice it to say that they agreed with me. But two of the important Punjab leaders were firm in their demand and Malaviyaji had promised to support them. For full four hours there was a complete lull. Then I took Malaviyaji aside and asked him the reason of the deadlock. He was reluctant to oppose the majority on the one hand and on the other hand his own decision coincided with that of the minority of two. I advised him to take votes and to vote himself with the minority. A load appeared to have been taken off his shoulders. He came back and voted with the minority. But when the majority decided against the leading of evidence before the Hunter Committee Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya himself drafted a very strong letter addressed to the Punjab Governor and took the whole responsibility on himself. This was a brilliant example of selflessness and the spirit of democracy. This was one out of many occasions when Malaviyaji set a silent but noble example for the political leaders.

I have only one more incident to relate before having done with the Amritsar Congress session.

The principal resolution was concerned with the Reforms. I will not refer, here, to the fate of the resolution in the Subjects Committee where it passed through

several doubtful stages, but it was evident that there would be a very stormy discussion over it in the open session and that the house might divide on the several amendments as well as the principal resolution which was sponsored by Das and Tilak. It was for this reason that at the end of the sitting of 31st December " it was announced that the visitors would not be allowed entrance in Pandal on the next day as there were some amendments to an important resolution on which the delegates would have to vote."

On January 1st 1920, I went on my usual morning round to the principal leaders. I began with the place where Gandhiji and Malaviyaji were putting up. On seeing me Malaviyaji at once took me aside and asked me to join himself and Mahatmaji in purging the Congress of its diplomatic and crooked policy. Asked for further particulars, Malaviyaji said that as he and Mahatmaji were not going to the Pandal that day I should also join them as a protest ; I took Malaviyaji upstairs and asked Mahatmaji for an explanation. He also reiterated what Malaviyaji had proposed. In reply I said —" I am at this moment the host who has invited the Congress and all the delegates are my guests. How can I absent myself ? " Mahatma Gandhi admitted the force of my argument, but Malaviyaji said that after the session was over I might go out of the Congress with them and work for its reform. On this I turned round to Mahatmaji and said—" You advised me to join the Congress in order to spiritualize it. If you intend to work for the reformation of the Congress by remaining inside, I am heart and soul with you, but if you want to secede

from the Congress in order to oppose it, I will have nothing to do with it." Mahatmaji again told me that Malaviyaji had not grasped his (Mahatmaji's) position. He was not certain that visitors would take no part in voting and his conscience forbade him from taking advantage of catch votes. I assured Mahatmaji that I would be responsible for all visitors remaining outside the Pandal as well as for regular counting of votes if there was a division. Mahatmaji was doubtful whether I would succeed in what I promised but Lala Harkishanlal, arriving at this time, assured Mahatmaji that I would be able to accomplish what I promised. The point at issue was whether the Reforms should be stigmatized as disappointing and whether Mr. Montague was to be thanked for the small mercies which were obtained through the reforms or not and lastly whether a response was to be made to the sentiments expressed in the Royal Proclamation. In my address as Chairman of the Reception Committee I had already pressed for responding to the King Emperor's gesture and for thanking Mr. Montague for the reforms, especially for their being passed by Parliament at that particular moment. But Das and his party was against all this. They had won over Lokmanya, much against his will, to join the thankless party. Their principal resolution was amended by Mahatma Gandhi.

I had been true to my word and had sent out all visitors and there was every arrangement made for divisions and proper counting of votes. But at the eleventh hour Mahatma Gandhi accepted a compromise, allowing the much discussed word "disappointing" to remain in-

tact, deleting reference to the Royal Proclamation and substituting a mild form of thanks to Mr. Montague. When the compromise was announced Deshbandhu Das ascended the rostrum, after brushing aside Malaviyaji who was about to explain the compromise in Hindi, and gave his own version of the compromise which showed the clear victory of his side. When the amended resolution was put to the vote, it was unanimously passed and the Pandal rang with a united exclamation of "Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai." Every one felt relieved and appeared to agree with the old adage—"All's well that ends well" except a few Bengali delegates and publicists who were murmuring—"Moorkho log! Gandhi ka Jaya Kahan hua? Dash ka Jai Kyun nahin bolta?"

"Fools! How is it Gandhi's victory? Why not say victory to Das?"

After this more than a dozen resolutions were put from the chair and passed *nem con* and after mutual thankings of hosts and guests, the memorable session came to a close.

XV

AMRITSAR TO CALCUTTA

INSTEAD of going out for collection of funds for the purchase of the Jallianwala Bagh and the raising over it of a memorial of the national martyrs, I was, in a way, spirited away to the Gurukula Vishvavidyalaya, Kangri. The gentleman in charge as Acharya there, threatened to leave by the middle of February 1920, without waiting for a successor and therefore the head of the governing body asked Pandit Malaviya and Mahatma Gandhi to absolve me from my promise of going out for collection of funds. In my address as Chairman of the Reception Committee, I had prophesied that the name of the sacred spot would be changed from Jalianwala to Amar Batika (garden of immortality) and if I had been spared from the service of the Gurukula, I would have tried my best to change the name ; but that was not to be.

At the Amritsar Congress, Mahatmaji was a staunch Co-operationist, but when the appeals of the Martial Law victims, after being admitted by the Privy Council under the Presidency of Lord Haldane, came on for hearing before the Judicial Committee with Lord Cave as President and were dismissed under pressure from the Bureaucracy, Mahatmaji became hopeless of getting justice from the British bureaucrats and was led by the Ali brothers unconsciously towards non-co-operation with the British Government itself. At this opportune moment Ali

Brothers proposed Hijarat to Indian Musalmans as in their opinion Hindustan had ceased to be Dar-ul-Aman and according to their faith if a country became Dar-ul-harab, the only alternative resource for a true Muslim was either *Jehad* or *Hijarat*. *Jehad* was out of question for the reason that India was powerless against the upto-date armed Military British bureaucrats and therefore the only resource left to them was *Hijarat*. And the Hindus were so much entangled in the meshes of the Muhammadan Khilafat movement that several individuals amongst them left Government service and other work and joined the Muhajareens. I wrote to Mahatmaji protesting against Indians leaving their motherland at the mercy of her enemies at this critical juncture. I asked him whether he could advise the sons of the motherland to go out when there was no hope of their getting an asylum anywhere, and when instead of thousands, a few lakhs of Indians go to Kabul relying upon the charity of the Sultan of that country whether it would be in the power of the sovereign to feed a number which would outnumber his own subjects. I exhorted Mahatmaji to exert his great influence and restrain our Musalman brethren from *Hijarat* because, even if the improbable became probable and the handful of Kabuli Afghans could drive the British out of India, the self-government so obtained would not be worth the purchase because a heaven obtained by the bravery of a neighbour would prove a very hell. I quoted the well-known Persian verse—"Haqqa ki ba aqubat dozakh barabar ast, raftan ba paimardie hamsaya dor bihisht."

I further urged upon him not to encourage the boy-

cott of Civil and Military service of the Government by the rank and file of the Indian services before he had made arrangements for maintaining them from public funds. If the boycott of services was essential (which I thought to be neither convenient nor necessary) I asked Mahatmaji to appeal to the Muhammadans in the highest services of the Government to lead the way. "If" I said, "Sir Md. Shafi and a few other Musalmans at the top of the services resigned they will be followed by their Hindu Colleagues and thus draw the attention of the Government towards their demands. And then there will be time to call upon the rank and file to resign when funds had been collected to enlist them in the National Police."

Mahatmaji's reply was truly characteristic of him. He said that he had not advised Hijrat but when our Muslim brethren thought it to be a call of their religion what could he say ; still he hoped to try to dissuade them from resorting to it. He would never advise throwing up of Government service by the rank and file until arrangements had been made for their maintenance and he agreed with me in holding that self-government obtained through the help of our neighbours would not be worth the purchase.

Gandhiji was true to his word and went as far as Sindh (which province was leading the way in *Hijrat*) to expostulate with the Khilafatists there. But no heed was paid to his sage advice ; the result literally bore out our forebodings and the sufferings of the Muhajareens were so lamentable that a veil ought to be thrown over the past.

The above correspondence appeared in my Hindi Weekly "Shraddha" which came out from the Gurukula at that time.

In August 1920 I thought of raising a funded capital for the Gurukula and went to Calcutta to begin work from that place. I had done propaganda work for the Gurukula for some time when a Special Session of the Congress was called at Calcutta as an appendage to the Khilafat Conference. Mahatma Gandhi from one extreme of full co-operation with the British Government had receded to the other of full non-co-operation and had toured round the country with his usual earnestness. Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das was away at Patna conducting the celebrated Dumraon case on behalf of the Maharaja against his late Diwan's sons who were represented by Pandit Motilal Nehru. Both the leaders, staunch Nationalist friends as they were, arrayed against each other in the mystification of legal squabbles, were away from Calcutta. I was daily coming in contact with the leaders present there but had kept my mind open. In fact my faith in the politics of the time was being weakened though I did not give utterance to my inner feelings. But the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi gradually changed my mental attitude. I saw that Gandhiji was feeling intensely for his non-violent non-co-operation programme and it would be a great national loss if he was disappointed in the hopes which he had formed.

Lala Lajpat Rai came to preside over the special Congress but his opinion was divided. Mahatmaji was being opposed by Mr. C. R. Das assisted by all the Bengal leaders. Lala Lajpat Rai's head responded to the plead-

ings of the intellectual giants of Bengal while his heart was drawn towards the appeals of the saint of Sabarmati. In order to know all about the ultimate triumph of the forlorn hope led by Mahatmaji, the report of the Special Congress ought to be studied, but in order to explain why after voting for the non-co-operation resolution in the Subjects Committee I remained not-voting in the division which was called for at the open session, another lengthy communication is necessary.

XVI

AT CALCUTTA

IN the Subjects Committee Gandhiji gained the support of Nehruji after entering into a compromise with him. To the object of obtaining redress of Punjab and Khilafat wrongs, the words " the attainment of Swarajya" were added. I had myself given notice of an amendment which I withdrew on an understanding being arrived at with Pandit Motilal Nehru.

The original resolution, as proposed by Gandhiji, fought shy of the word 'boycott' and urged the use of Swadeshi cloth only. Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachariar of Salem (Madras) proposed to add the following clause—'Boycott of all foreign goods.' Of course this was only an attempt to thwart Mahatma Gandhi who did not like to use words which smacked of hatred and violence. The President put all amendments, one by one, to the vote except Mr. Achariar's and then the original resolution was put and carried by a majority of votes. Mr. Achariar pressed that his amendment became a part of the original proposition and was passed. This was contested by the other party. On this I gave notice of an amendment purporting to delete the clause about boycott of all foreign goods—and this for very good reasons. If the clause were passed, we would not be able to find one man in India (not excluding Mahatma Gandhi) who would be able to carry out this mandate in its entirety.

Lala Lajpat Rai asked me not to move the amendment as Mr. Achariar's amendment was not part of the resolution but was a new proposition altogether, which even if pressed, could be opposed separately. I was called out by a pressing demand by one of my Gurukula graduates, who had accompanied me with the assurance that I would oppose the resolution about the boycott of all foreign goods in the open session. But what was my astonishment when I learnt in the open session that after I left the Subjects Committee Mr. Achariar had convinced the house that his proposed clause formed part of the original resolution which had been passed. On this I again gave a notice of moving the deletion of this clause, but the President ruled my amendment out of order because a notice had not been given in the Subjects Committee. I reminded the President of his assurance to me that it was a separate resolution, but he replied that according to rules my amendment could not be allowed at that stage. I could either support the resolution as a whole or oppose it.

Mahatma Gandhi with his usual ability, on moving the resolution, gave an explanation of his attitude. Knowing well that the boycott of all foreign goods was an impossibility even with him, he moved the resolution with a reservation. I got up when my turn came and began with the explanation that although agreeing with the major portion of the resolution and voting for it in the Subjects Committee, I was compelled to stand up in opposition because an amendment sent up by me to the President was not allowed here. I was proceeding to relate the story of my amendment in the Subjects Com-

mittee when the President stopped me and ruled that I could not relate there what had occurred in the Subjects Committee. I asked his permission to refer to the doings in the Subjects Committee in order to clear my position ; but he insisted on carrying out his ruling and I sat down without any further remonstrance. The whole of this incident was given by me in detail at that time to Amrit Bazar Patrika with the permission of Lala Lajpat Rai.

I took part in the Special Congress at Calcutta for supporting my resolution about the removal of Untouchability. I had sent in a resolution to that effect, but it was persistently shelved in the Subjects Committee. Even Mahatma Gandhi had not realized its importance and was taken up with his resolution of non-violent Non-co-operation. The reason for it was plain. The Non-violent Non-co-operation resolution had been passed by the Khilafat Committee and Mahatmaji threatened to sponsor it outside the Congress, if it was not passed there. I thought it to be a misfortune if Mahatmaji would be obliged to sever his connection with the oldest political movement in India and, therefore, instead of remaining silent in the Subjects Committee I canvassed for votes and gained not less than 25 votes for Mahatmaji's proposal in the Subjects Committee. But my pet resolution having failed to obtain the sympathy of the leaders, I left back for the Gurukula and Mahatmaji for the South. While touring in the Madras Presidency he was heckled by the so-called Panchama Untouchables of the South with questions about their position on the attainment of the national right of self-determination. The result was that one means of the early attainment of

Swarajya became the removal of Untouchability. After a time I went to Burma for collection of funds for the Gurukula, at the end of October and returned back in the first week of December 1920. While in Burma I was followed by a Deputy Superintendent, two Inspectors and two Sub-Inspectors of Police during the whole of my tour, and was approached by them with a request not to touch politics. But I did not pay heed either to their requests or to their threats and the revolution which occurred in the mentality of the Indians and the Burmese alike was attested by Mr. Abbas Tayabji who was there when I left and remained in Burma till sometime after.

There is one particular fact about Maulana Shaukat Ali's doings, which I must relate here. Sitting on the dais in the Calcutta Special Session, Maulana Shaukat Ali, in the hearing of more than 50 persons, while the merits of non-violence were being discussed, said—"Mahatma Gandhi is a shrewd Bania. You do not understand his real object. By putting you under discipline, he is preparing you for guerilla warfare. He is not such an out-and-out non-violencist as you all suppose." I was shocked to hear all this from the big brother and remonstrated with him, which he treated with humour. I had no occasion to talk to Mahatma Gandhi about it at Calcutta. Next came the ordinary session at Nagpur which I attended. There too I noticed the big Ali Brother playing the same pranks. On that occasion I wanted to warn Mahatma Gandhi but unfortunately I was attacked with influenza and could not join the last sitting of the Session. Still I wrote to Mahatmaji telling of my inability to go to him and asked him to come to me because

I had an important communication to make. He also pleaded his inability to get off from deputations from different provinces, who came to see him and sent his Secretary Shriyut Mahadeva Desai, instead. I gave him my message to Gandhiji saying that he ought to be on his guard because his motives were being misrepresented by his trusted colleagues. There was another prominent fact to which I drew the attention of Mahatma Gandhi. Both of us went together one night to the Khilafat Conference at Nagpur. The Ayats (verses) of the Quaran recited by Maulanas on that occasion contained frequent references to Jihad against and the killing of Kafirs. But when I drew his attention to this phase of the Khilafat movement Mahatmaji smiled and said—"They are alluding to the British bureaucracy." In reply I said that it was all subversive of the idea of non-violence and when a revulsion of feeling came, the Muhammadan Maulanas would not refrain from using these verses against the Hindus.

At Nagpur I was down with influenza. I left in the Special for Delhi and went for a change to the Kurukshetra Gurukula. I grew worse there and left for Gurukula Vishwavidyalaya at Kangri where I was confined to bed with an attack of Bright's Disease for more than 3 months. During all this time I was daily devoting at least 2 hours to supplicating the Supreme Father-Mother Atma for fitting the Indian nation for true Swarajya.

XVII

NEO MAULANA

IN the middle of April 1921 when I was allowed by my medical advisers to leave my bed, they admonished me not to walk more than two furlongs a day, to lie down for rest as much as possible and not to undertake long night journeys. But the marriage of Pandit Motilal Nehru's daughter was to be celebrated in the beginning of May and all the Hindu and Muslim leaders were to be there. I could not absent myself and therefore went to Delhi first, from which place I started for Allahabad. I broke journey at Cawnpore and I mention this because I spoke there in a public meeting and exhorted non-violent non-co-operators not to nurse the thought of getting Swarajya within 12 months because disappointment may be followed by a reaction which would prostrate the whole nation for scores of years. I asked them to fight the battle of freedom to the very end and make proper preparations for it.

The next day I left for Allahabad by the Punjab Howrah Mail. Maulana Muhammad Ali was also travelling by the same train and I got in his compartment. Our talk centered round the topic of the day. Sir William Vincent (then Home Member of the Government of India) had repeated from his safe place in the Legislative Assembly that he had documentary proofs shewing that Mr. Muhammed Ali was corresponding with

the Kabul Government against the British. During that very period a second class leader of the moderate liberal party—because all of them were leaders; there were no followers—told me that a letter intercepted by the C. I. D. was actually shewn to Dr. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru purporting to have been written by Mr. Muhammad Ali. I gave the whole thing in the Press and challenged the Government to publish a *facsimile* of the same in the papers so that the public might have an occasion to judge whether the letter was in the handwriting of Mr. Muhammad Ali at all. On his enquiring about the language in which the letter in dispute was written, I told him that it was alleged to be in Persian. Mr. Muhammad Ali exclaimed—"Then it could not be written by me. I am not only innocent of Arabic but cannot write a letter in correct Persian, Urdu poet though I am some worth." I could not then understand how a man, innocent of Arabic and the Persian lauguages both, could obtain the degree of Maulana, but the riddle was solved when I read the following in the open letter addressed to Musalmans by the late Maulana Abdul Bari of Lucknow, the declared Murshid of the Ali Brothers. At page 35 he wrote :—"The diploma (*sanad*) of Maulana, which has been awarded to brother Maulana Muhammad Ali from Firangi Mahal was given on account of his discharge of duties of Tabligh (Conversions). In the Amritsar (Congress) Meeting, when all the topmost Hindu leaders were present, he gave the message of Islam by name to each one of them and moreover he gave the message of Islam to the Viceroy and through Lord Chelmsford to King George V. This was the duty of

the Real Ulema (learned). When he (Muhammad Ali) discharged this duty on a grand scale, then from this place (Firangi Mahal) this title of exalted office was presented to him."

It is a different matter, altogether, whether Mr. Muhammad Ali did really give the Message of Islam to every topmost Hindu leader at Amritsar; but when I asked Pandits Nehru and Malaviya, the late lamented Deshbandhu C. R. Das and Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachariar and others, they denied having been addressed on this subject by the neo Maulana. But these might have no place among the topmost Hindu leaders in the eyes of this Maulana. I, therefore, enquired of Mahatma Gandhi and he too denied having been personally approached by brother Muhammad Ali with this message.

Apologising to my readers for this digression which is by the way, I come to the point again. Maulana Muhammad Ali complained about political leaders taking him to task for sending a wire to the Sultan of Kabul urging him not to make peace with the British Government. I, too, urged that it was not a wise step that he had taken. He kept quiet at the time but when we reached the Anand Bhavan (Pandit Nehru's palace), brother Muhammad Ali took me aside and taking out a paper from his hand-bag, gave a draft of a telegram to me to read. What was my astonishment when I saw the draft of the selfsame telegram in the peculiar handwriting of the Father of the non-violent non-co-operation movement!

Mahatma Gandhi reached Anand Bhavan on the next morning. It was his day of Maunvrata. When I went to see him, he handed over to me a letter and a telegram

which he had received from Pandit Malaviyaji. The purport of the letter was that Lord Reading was a very good man in fact a saint and he appeared to be ready to give all the Reforms which the Indians wanted ; so brother Gandhi should make haste to go to Simla to have an interview with him (Lord Reading). The telegram simply urged the necessity of Gandhiji's going to Simla with a loving threat that Malaviyaji would have to leave the cool breeze of Simla for the burning heat of Allahabad if he did not assent to go to Simla.

I told Gandhiji not to go without consulting the Working Committee of the Congress, which had been called for the next evening. The reasons which I then gave to dissuade Gandhiji from going to see Lord Reading need not be repeated here. They were repeated by Babu Ramananda Chatterji in the Modern Review.

Then came brother Andrews from Simla the same afternoon and after embracing me, gave such a glowing account of his interview with the late Lord Chief Justice of Great Britain that all present were charmed. But I began a heartless cross-examination which elicited the fact that the astute diplomat had been reading the simple heart of the man of faith like an open book while keeping his own heart and mind completely closed to the eyes of his interviewer. Well, I gave my warning and my duty was discharged. Mahatmaji could not pay the least attention to my warning because he had full faith in his invincibility and as regards consulting the Working Committee he never thought of it. Mahatmaji went to Simla, he was made to sign a typed letter, addressed to the Private Secretary asking for an interview with the Viceroy

and actually met Lord Reading. The upshot of that meeting is known all over the world. The astute diplomat took every advantage of the Saint's sincerity and simplicity and if Gandhiji's trial of truthfulness and the preservation of the sanctity of vow appeared with resplendent brightness, the actual mundane trophies of war remained in the hands of the man of the world.

This was, perhaps, the fourth Himalayan blunder which Mahatma Gandhi committed by putting the Ali Brothers in an awkward position and there were slight signs of revulsion of feelings among the followers when another stroke of policy captured the imagination of the Indian masses. Overlooking the three conditions for obtaining Swarajya within 12 months, the great Mahatma proposed to get Swarajya to the impatient Indian masses within three months if one crore (ten millions) of rupees were collected, one crore of 4 anna-paying members were enrolled and 20 lakhs of charkas were distributed up to the end of June 1921.

This proposal of Gandhiji was passed by the A. I. C. C. at Bezwada on 21st March 1921 in preference to several plausible proposals put forward by other leaders. Not only this but the new National flag, with Charkha as its chief emblem, was also accepted at Bezwada.

I raised a strong protest against this despotic dictatorship in the columns of Hindi Shraddha, a translation of which I give below :—" The thinking portion of Indians are puzzled to see that whatever proposal Gandhiji puts forward is literally accepted. Babu Bipin Chandra Pal presided over the Bengal Provincial Political Conference. In that Conference Bipin Babu defined Swarajya accord-

ing to his own conviction as "full responsible Government on Dominion lines within the Empire." Such a howl was raised on this that the President had to leave the Pandal. The Press also took him to task for defining the word Swarajya at length, when the Congress had left it for the Indian Nation to decide and define. But after that the following has appeared in the Young India in its issue of 6th April, 1921 :—"A friend from South Africa writes to say that several Europeans, there, are prepared to help the struggle for Swarajya, but they want to be assured on certain points. As the points raised are of general importance, I gladly deal with them here.

"Does Mr. Gandhi's Swaraj mean sovereign independence or full responsible Government within the Empire on dominion lines?"

"I should certainly be satisfied with full responsible Government on Dominion lines, if the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are redressed. India cannot remain within the Empire if the latter cannot redress the two wrongs; for full responsible Government will have no meaning for India if she cannot refuse to give pensions to Officers who have wronged her or if she cannot secure a settlement of the Khilafat terms. England then becomes an 'Enemy country' for India."

"If this was the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi at Nagpur, then I cannot understand why he did not agree with Pandit Malaviya. And if he has changed his opinion since then, he ought to consider whether it was proper for him to express this change without getting it passed by the coming session. For three full months I waited to see whether any of those, who raised a hue and cry

against Bipin Babu, would protest against Mahatmaji. And even those papers, that published this note (of Gandhiji), did not comment upon it.

"At Bezwada Mahatmaji got the Indian National Flag passed by the A.I.C.C. and I learn from "the Independent" that the flag with charkha emblem will be unfurled at Allahabad at the time of the District Congress Committee meeting."

At the end I again protested against this despotic Dictatorship with double force.

By the 30th of June 1921, more than one crore of Rupees had been collected for the Tilak Swarajya Fund. I am sure a crore of 4 anna paying members were enlisted and although no actual list could be prepared, about 20 lakhs of charkhas were distributed. But when the 30th of September came, there was no sign of Swarajya. The reply of Mahatmaji was : this was only a disciplinary measure to judge whether the country was prepared for Swarajya or not. Actual Swarajya would come by and bye.

XVIII

PROBLEM OF UNTOUCHABILITY

THE sinews of war having been collected, a meeting of the A.I.C.C. was called at Lucknow for devising measures in order to utilize the same. Before the Committee met Gandhiji discussed the position of the Working Committee in Young India dated 29th June. He said that the Working Committee should consist of members who were actuated with a single motive. There was no room for opposition parties nor for difference of opinion. If any of its members could not see his way to work with others, he ought to resign. Gandhiji raised this discussion for the reason that when the sinews of war were ready there ought not to remain any obstacles in the way of workers.

I supported Mahatma Gandhiji with the following remarks :—"Mahatmaji will naturally be the President of the Working Committee, the rest, 14 members, must be such as are the devoted followers of Mahatmaji in all respects—in the words of Ali brothers who should be ready to bow down before their general without the least objection. Although at the present moment, while the illiterate masses consider Gandhiji to be the incarnation of God, the educated people have taken him to be the Congress personified, yet the individual who has infused new spiritual life in the country and promises to obtain for you Swarajya within 12 months, ought to be given

full opportunity to put forth his whole strength.....If Swarajya does not become a *fait accompli* on 31st December 1921, then the *Avatar* theory will, of itself, be refuted but Indians will become fit to continue the battle of freedom for generations. At present it will be harmful in the best interests of the country to criticize every act of Mahatma Gandhi and to compel him to give satisfactory replies to every street-boy. The above appeared in the "Shraddha" of 9th July, 1921 and Gandhiji formed his Working Committee in conformity with his desires.

In the middle of August I went to join the session of the Punjab Provincial Political Conference at Multan. The Khilafat vow was being taken by large numbers of Hindus and Muhammadans alike and great enthusiasm prevailed. Strong bitter speeches were the order of the day and whoever was the most violent in his speech bore away the palm. Up to that time I never thought that it was a mere show of threat on the part of several leaders while in their heart of hearts they were thinking of a compromise with the Government. But Mr. Stokes of Kotgarh opened my eyes there. He told me that while Gandhiji was threatening that he would not survive if Swarajya was not obtained by the end of 1921, the rest of the political leaders, who roared like lions from the rostrum, were anxiously looking forward to a compromise with the British Government. The leaders did not know to what chaos the struggle in which they were engaged would lead them. On my return journey I saw Lala Lajpat Rai and he, too, confirmed Mr. Stokes' view. From the topmost leaders to those who led portions of the masses, every leader appeared to be in the dark as

to where Mahatmaji was leading them. I told them to have a plain talk with Mahatmaji as to the final goal to which he wanted to lead them and to find out whether he would retire to the Himalayas, abandoning his faithful confederates to shift for themselves. Then I told Lala Lajpat Rai that nobody paid the least heed to the removal of untouchability and I felt that problem to be very acute in Delhi. I had a thousand rupees to begin work with, Lala Lajpat Rai gave me a cheque for Rs. 500 and advised me to wire to Gandhiji for further pecuniary help out of the Congress funds at his disposal.

I reached Delhi on 17th August 1921 and found that the question of the removal of untouchability was becoming very acute. The Aryasamaj people had been working for the raising of the depressed classes in and around Delhi more than half a dozen years before that period, but I found that the best amongst them had gone against the Congress and the Hindu-Muslim Communities. I called a few of their chief chaudharies and asked the reason of their revolt. They gave the following story :—

"The Secretary of the Delhi Congress Committee called the chaudharies of the Chamars and requested them to give to the Congress as many four-anna paying members as they could. The reply of the elders was that unless their grievance as regards the taking of water from the public wells was removed, they could not induce their brethren to join the Congress. The Secretary was a choleric man of hasty temper and said they wanted Swarajya at once but the grievance of the Chamars could wait and would be removed by and by. One of the young men got up and said—"Our trouble from which we are

suffering for centuries must wait solution, but the *laddu* of Swarajya must go into your mouth at once ! We shall see how you obtain Swarajya immediately !! " I then induced Hindus of Delhi to allow the depressed classes to take water from their wells, but the Muslim Congressmen stood in our way and for a time it seemed that even the Aryasamajists would not be able to keep the depressed classes free from the machinations of the bureaucracy. It was at such a crisis that I wrote the following letter to Mahatma Gandhi on 9th September, 1921 :—

" I wired from Lahore that I would apply for financial aid through the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee but on reaching Delhi I found that the uplift of the depressed classes through the Congress was difficult. The Delhi and Agra *Chamars* simply demand that they be allowed to draw water from wells used both by the Hindus and Muhammadans and that water be not served to them (from Hindu water booths) through bamboos or leaves. Even that appears impossible for the Congress Committee to accomplish. Not only this ; a Musalman trader of Sadr went to the length of saying that even if Hindus allowed (these men) to draw water from common wells, the Musalmans would forcibly restrain them from drawing water because they (the chamars) ate carrion.

I know that there are thousands of these chamars who do not either drink wine or eat flesh of any kind and a few of them who eat carrion are being weaned by the Aryasamajists from that filthy habit. But I ask —do Hindu and Muslim meat-eaters devour flesh of living cattle ? Do they not eat the flesh of the cattle when they are dead ?

At Nagpur you laid down that one of the conditions for obtaining Swarajya within 12 months was to give their rights to the depressed classes and without waiting for the accomplishment of their uplift, you have decreed that if there is a complete boycott of foreign cloth up till the 30th September, Swarajya will be an accomplished fact on the 1st of October. The extension of the use of Swaheshi Cloth is absolutely necessary but as long as 6½ crores of our suppressed classes are taking refuge with the British burcaucracy so long will the extension of Swadeshi be impossible.

I now want to engage with my limited energy in the uplift of the depressed classes. I do not understand whether the Swarajya obtained without the so-called untouchable brethren of ours joining us will prove salutary for the Indian nation.

I am writing this letter simply to inform you that I cannot, now, apply to the Working Committee for financial aid. Whatever I can do with my limited means I will do.

I want to draw your attention to another urgent matter. You laid stress on purchasing the whole of the Jallianwala site. That was done ; I too had a small share in the negotiations. With your great influence you got money collected for that purpose. The site has been purchased and about two lakhs and a half is lying for erecting a fitting memorial for the martyrs. But the conditions of the Compound of Jallianwala gave me great pain. I was told that when Lord Reading paid a visit to the place, a high European Official of the Government said that there did not appear to be any strong resentment

amongst Indians for the bloodshed at the place. It was simply the hubbub raised by a few agitators. Will you pay the least heed to that?

You laid stress on the Jallianwala Memorial. Leaving that halfway you launched non-violent non-co-operation at Calcutta. An overwhelming majority of the nation bowed their head before your decree. By the programme you wanted to paralyze the bureaucratic Government. In that connection the first work was to give up titles. That could not paralyse the Government, but if we could have succeeded in taking out even half the students attending Government and semi-Government institutions, something could have been achieved. In my humble opinion we have gained nothing by that agitation. In that connection the only remaining work is to give permanence to the newly started national institutions and to prepare a national scheme of study. For that there is no necessity of exciting propaganda. Further if at least ¾th of Vakils and Barristers had given up their practice, some commotion had taken place. But in that too there was no success. Those high-souled lawyers who gave up practice have done a great deal in raising the political outlook of the nation, but we did not succeed in paralyzing the government even by that.

Then we did not succeed in fulfilling the conditions which were laid down at Nagpur for obtaining Swarajya. Your triumphal procession does not allow you to learn the actual condition of things. During the last few days I have talked to some of the intermediate Hindu Muslim leaders of the Punjab and the United Provinces. In the hands of these (leaders) is the real rein of the masses.

I know that among both the communities there is a fall in their mutual trust. The disputes between Brahmans and Non-Brahmans in the South have not been settled and in the absorption of the depressed classes not a single step has been taken. What you have done in this respect —and a great deal have you done—is commendable, but the effect of that has been washed away by the rest of the Non-Co-operators.

Brushing all these aside you proclaimed the boycott of foreign cloth alone to be the means of attaining Swarajya. The All-India Congress Committee again bowed down to your decision. Much has been done in popularizing the Swadeshi cloth during the last few weeks and this has effectively told upon the import of the foreign cloth. But you have again decreed that if by the 30th of September, 1921, the complete boycott of foreign cloth is not attained then a further period of 12 months will elapse before there is any possibility of attaining Swarajya.

A glance at the above shews that you think there is a probability of violence bursting forth if civil disobedience of laws and consequently non-payment of taxes is allowed, and I, also, believe the same to be a fact. But there is a difference in our viewpoints. You hold that the masses have not been so disciplined as to become non-violent, while I think that, even, if the masses become disciplined, the devoted pupils of the bureaucracy will provoke the masses so much that their remaining non-violent will become impossible. Perhaps the Khilafat Conference at Karachi has passed the resolution of establishing a republic which has been supported by Maulana Shaukat

Ali at Bombay in the following words :—'.....unless Government settled the Khilafat and Punjab grievances, they would unfurl the banner of independence at the next session of the Indian National Congress at Ahmedabad.' Is this the proper procedure of solving the problem of Swarajya ?

Six and a half crores of so-called untouchables separated from you, the non-Brahmans of all Madras your firm oppositionists, the Monopolists of intellect, the Moderates, not only the supporters of the Government, but ready to go ten steps beyond them ! And then the Northerners are quite distinct from the Southerners. Whatever you order must be obeyed without any remonstrance up to the 25th of December, 1921, (a day before the Congress session was to begin). But if on that date the Swarajya, for which the people have made such splendid sacrifice, is not obtained, then you should be ready with your scheme of work for the future. But perhaps your spiritual eye has seen what is hidden from the Common people."

I have given the whole of the letter in order to lay bare before the public the working of my mind and at that period.

XIX

BONFIRE OF FOREIGN CLOTH

LONG before Mahatma Gandhi started the movement of pure Swadeshi, it had been working its way through some of the leaders of the Aryasamaj, in the Punjab. The founder of the Aryasamaj was the first Swadeshi preacher in India and a suit of clothes made of handspun and hand-woven material which His Highness Sir Nahar Singh, the Rajadhiraj of Shahpura exhibited at Muttra on the occasion of Rishi Dayananda's birth centenary shewed the result of Dayanand's practical teaching. I, myself, had adopted the Swadeshi years before I took charge of the Gurukula at Hardwar, in the beginning of the year 1902 A.D. So the boycott of foreign cloth alone was not a novelty for me.

But when Mahatma Gandhi sent forth his *fiat* for burning all foreign cloth and a great demonstration of it was to be made at Bombay, I sent a wire to Mahatmaji not to generate hatred against foreigners and to allow the discarded clothes to be distributed among the starving and naked poor of India. Brother Andrews also sent a protest to the same effect.

I also sent a detailed letter to Gandhiji on the subject and wrote about my other differences of opinion with him. Mahatmaji wrote in reply in Hindi :—" I have received your letters. I had no time in Bombay to send a reply. If your difference of opinion is about the burn-

ing of foreign cloth alone, then it is an ordinary matter. I wish to explain to you the occasion of that decision. As regards the other differences of opinion, do write to me. I wish that you may accept financial aid for handweaving in the Gurukula. In spite of difference of opinions, if it is not a very essential difference of opinion—there is no reason why we should not help each other. In your last letter I saw a pessimistic wave pervading. Considering me your younger brother, write to me in detail and make me a sharer in your sorrow."

After this Gandhiji gave his viewpoint as regards the burning of foreign cloth in the Press, and this combined with other circumstances reconciled me to his view. As regards the other difference of opinion I wrote to him on 13th October 1921—"The second difference of opinion was that when the civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes was decided upon, the British bureaucracy ought to be informed at the same time that if any blood flows as its consequence, the non-violent non-co-operation will not be considered responsible for it and the work will not be stopped for fear of (outside) violence. Now that I have read your statement in the Press, I am satisfied. When that occasion will arise I will be at one with you. There is no third difference of opinion."

But it appeared afterwards that Gandhiji's statement was capable of more than one interpretation—as the Bardoli resolution afterwards proved.

After describing the efforts that I was making for introducing handspinning and handweaving in the Gurukula and describing the means of introducing universal peace according to the Vedas as interpreted by Rishi

Dayananda, I finished by stating the efforts which I was making to save the depressed classes from the clutches of the agents of the bureaucracy.

While people came to the conclusion that the burning of foreign cloth was a religious duty of the Indians and Das, Nehru and other topmost leaders made a bonfire of cloth worth thousands, the Khilafat Musalmans got permission from Mahatmaji to send all foreign cloth for the use of their Turkish brethren. This again was a great shock to me. While Mahatmaji stood adamant and did not have the least regard for Hindu feeling when a question of principle was involved, for the Muslim dereliction of duty there was always a very soft corner in his heart. I was absent from Delhi when the collection of cloth for Angora began and my Ashram being the home of all nationalists, the Muslim collectors took away all the cloth which was awaiting my arrival for being put to the flames—I could not, for the life of me, understand the ethics of depriving our own poor millions of the means of covering their nudity and sending the selfsame clothes to a distant land. It was acting just like the beggar who was ready to fill the begging bowls of those standing at his door—

" आप मियां मंगते और द्वार खडे दर्वेश "

Gandhiji had been taken at his word and men, money and Charkhas had been supplied to him by the people of India. He could not stand still. A meeting of the A.I.C.C. was called at Delhi for the 3rd and 4th of November 1921. The proceedings of that meeting gave another shock to me. The President of the year, Mr.

C. Vijayaraghavachariar, was very shabbily treated and invectives against those who had their conscientious doubts as to whether the time for Mass Civil Disobedience of laws had arrived, was the order of the day. I need not go into the details of that meeting. Suffice it to say that the conditions for starting Mass Civil Disobedience were laid down—the chief items being complete removal of untouchability and at least 80 per cent. of the population using handspun and handwoven cloth of local produce. Mahatma Gandhi induced an overwhelming majority to allow him to prepare Bardoli Taluqa for Civil Disobedience.

Raizada Hansraj of Jalandhar undertook to prepare one Teshil of the Jalandhar District and Lala Shankarlal to prepare the city of Delhi for Civil Disobedience. This was one step towards Swarajya.

Another important business transacted at that time was a special Conference of the Hindus held on 7th and 8th November 1921, in order to adopt the Programme of non-violent non-co-operation of the Congress against the Government for disregarding the repeated requests of the Hindu Community as regards the protection of cows. Hakeem Mohammad Ajmal Khan acted as Chairman of the Reception Committee and gave a very novel advice. Of course the following resolutions were bound to be passed.

"This All-India Hindu Mahasabha fully accepts the resolution of the Sub-Committee appointed at Brindaban 'that for the protection of cows it is necessary to carry out the full programme of non-violent non-co-operation which is being worked under the aegis of the Con-

gress' and exhorts all Hindus to consider it to be their duty to act accordingly."

A further resolution laid down—"Whereas the advent of the Heir-apparent is the means of strengthening the power of the British Government—therefore, it is the religious duty of every Hindu to boycott it completely, to boycott foreign cloth and to use pure Swadeshi, and as in the Cantonments lakhs of cows are slaughtered annually, therefore, under such conditions no Hindu should serve the British Government specially in the Police and Military Departments and generally in other departments." It was the first time that I was induced to join the Hindu Mahasabha and when a Sub-Committee was appointed to give effect to the above resolutions I was appointed its President.

But there was one resolution adopted at the suggestion of Hakeem Ajmal Khan which had a peculiar meaning for non-co-operators. It ran as follows :—"This Mahasabha respectfully entreats the Dharmacharyas, learned Sadhus and Pandits to give a vyavastha (fiat), according to the Vedas and Shastras, for non-co-operation with the English Government which allow cow-killing so that the Hindus' life-giving mother cow might be protected."

Hakeem Saheb had already laid the foundation of the 'Jamayat-Ulema-i-Hind' which promulgated strong Fatwas against the British Government for the protection of the Khilafat and his suggestion was to organize a similar Jamayat of Pandits to give vyavastha against the devilish Government which allowed slaughter of the cows.

Where Hakeem Saheb succeeded, the Hindus failed

to form such an organization and I feel now that they were fortunate in their failure. If a 'Jayamat-i-Panditan' had become a *fait accompli*, the Hindus would also have been powerless to stem the tide of orthodox bigotry as the thinking portion of the Musalmans are finding themselves powerless to stop the onrush of Muhammadan bigotry and fanaticism. This is only by the way.

The chief work which I had to do on this occasion was to clear the position of Mahatma Gandhi in the eyes of the Congress leaders. When other leaders failed to elicit anything from Gandhiji, I broached the subject in a straightforward blunt manner. In substance I said—"Your pronouncements are always dubious. You appear to be determined to obtain Swarajya by the end of December 1921, and if Indians fail to accomplish that, you threaten either to end yourself or to depart to the Himalayas and to leave the Indian peoples to their fate. How can you expect people to work hopefully when they think that in case of their failure to attain the unattainable within less than two months they are sure to lose 'your inspiring guidance'? The plain question is—Will you sever your connection with the movement if Swarajya is not obtained on the 31st of December, 1921?" Thus asked pointedly Mahatma Gandhi's reply was reassuring. He said—"If I find the Indian people determined to work for Swarajya I will go on guiding them." This was a distinct gain in order to keep up the spirit of the leaders.

XX

DELHI MARTYRS' MEMORIAL

UNTIL that period and even for some time afterwards, I never went to the public press with my criticisms but contented myself with writing and speaking direct to Mahatma Gandhi only.

It had been resolved in Delhi at a mass meeting held on 7th April 1919 that a memorial to the Delhi martyrs of 30th March 1919 be raised. Seth Ragghu Mull wired from Calcutta that if a proper site was secured he would donate one lakh of rupees for a hall. Work was begun after the hartal was over on 17th March 1919 and I began to collect money. A site (the well-known Pataudi house which was dubbed Gandhi Nagar subsequently) was secured for one lakh of rupees out of which 55 thousand were subscribed at once and I got possession of the building and site on paying the above sum in cash and giving a Promissory note to the sellers for the balance of 45 thousand with a promise to pay interest at the rate of seven and a half per cent. per annum. That sum was standing against me because when my work of collections was in full swing the Chief Commissioner advised Hakeem Ajmal Khan, President and Mr. K. A. Desai, Treasurer of the Martyrs' Memorial Committee to ask me to postpone the collection of money as this would keep up an excitement among the people. Unfortunately both the gentlemen promised to induce me to stop col-

lections and I had to give up further efforts. 'Strike the iron while it is hot' is an old proverb which holds good for all time. Once postponed the work of collections could not be revived on account of my being engaged in the Punjab relief work and then in making the Amritsar Congress a success. When that was finished I was called to the Gurukula from whence I had been relieved only recently.

I began the collection of funds in right earnest, but I had to go to Gujarat in accordance with a previous promise, after beginning work at Delhi. I intended to leave Delhi on the morning of November 19th so as to reach Navasari on the morning of the 20th. But in the meantime the Prince of Wales had arrived in Bombay on the 17th and a violent riot broke out, of which an account reached Delhi on the 18th.

The A. P. had wired that only hooligans and some millhands took part in the riots, but after working diligently for ending the riot, assisted as he was loyally by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Pandit Nekiram, Maulana Azad Sobhani and others, Mahatma Gandhi in his public statement admitted that not only the intelligentsia but even non-co-operators had taken prominent active part in murderous attacks and arson.

Lala Lajpat Rai was travelling with me, as he was going to join the Congress Working Committee Meeting which was to take place on 22nd November at Bombay. Mr. C. R. Das and Pandit Nehru were also on their way to Bombay but without waiting for them and without placing the whole matter before the Working Committee, Mahatmaji condemned his non-co-operating followers

right and left and threatened to begin Satyagrah by going on hunger strike. It was another Himalayan mistake on the part of Mahatmaji. Such was the opinion of some of his most devoted colleagues. Why did he not wait till the 22nd November so that a joint statement could have gone out in the name of the Working Committee after a sifting enquiry into the causes of the disturbances? People felt that Mahatmaji had more regard for his own reputation for truth and spirit of non-violence than for doing justice to thousands of his followers who were ready to sacrifice and had actually sacrificed their all at the altar of hero-worship.

Gandhiji was engaged in preparing Bardoli Taluqa, of the Surat District, for civil disobedience when he was called to Bombay for the Working Committee Meeting. There was a private school at *Kharsupa* which some of the promoters desired to change into a Gurukula. I had been called to perform the opening ceremony of the same. But when I drove in a tonga to the place, it appeared that Mahatma Gandhi's trusted lieutenants had induced the majority of donors not to allow a change. The school was called *National* but there was no difference in the curriculum and discipline to distinguish it from Government Schools. All the same I was asked to address the audience which had gathered there. I enquired whether the so-called Untouchables were freely admitted to the Boarding and the School. It then appeared that no Untouchable lad had ever been admitted to the boarding house while the three, who had been admitted in the school, were not allowed to sit with their fellow-students in the class room but were accommodated separately in the

verandah. In my lecture I took the management to task and told them not to call the school national until every child of the nation could be admitted in it freely.

My exhortation did not fall on deaf ears. The Manager compelled the staff, on the very next day, to allow the depressed class boys to sit with the class. The result was that in the next sitting more than half the students absented themselves, and on the next day, the benches were all empty and except, perhaps, the headmaster and one other teacher the whole school staff made themselves scarce. The result was that the splendid building of the school, located in the healthy open space, was locked and was not opened till Bardoli had come and gone and nobody remained to insist on depressed class boys to mix with the so-called caste lads.

From Supa I went to Surat and other places for popularizing the Gurukula system of education and paid a visit to Bardoli also. I found Khaddar in evidence but there were no signs of the complete removal of untouchability. In the meeting, which I addressed, some untouchbles mixed with the others, but when the family of my own host went home from the meeting, they all bathed with their clothes on.

I was to leave Navasari on the 1st of December 1921. I heard that Gandhiji was going to Bardoli and I sent word that I would be grateful if he met me at Surat in the afternoon of that day. Mahatmaji very kindly agreed and I reached the Ashram where he was putting up. As I had to leave the same night by the Peshawar Mail I plunged into the subject at once and gave free expression to my opinion. Dr. Dixit, Shrimati Ansuya Devi and

more than a dozen of his other immediate disciples were present. I asked Mahatmaji to name a single non-co-operator whom he saw engaged in the riots. His reply was that he saw them with his own eyes. In reply I said that he, most probably, saw some of the rioters clad in Gandhi Cap and Khaddar and I know as a fact that about 500 C. I. D. men from Northern India were clad in pure Khaddar. I further drew his attention to a note in the Times of India (Bombay) that there was revulsion of feeling among the non-co-operators and at the departure of the Prince of Wales hundreds of Gandhi Caps were being waved with the wearers hurrahing the Royal train. These men, I said, were C. I. D. men.

Gandhiji was cast down and the faith of Congress men, even, was shaken ; but the Government, foolishly, gave a challenge to the people by introducing the Criminal Amendment Act and there was again a revulsion of feeling in favour of Gandhiji and against the British bureaucracy. I, myself, was ready to press for a change of programme but the wholesale arrests and convictions which the Government began under the new repressive measures sealed my lips and compelled me to join those who had taken up the gauntlet thrown by the Government.

There was a great upheaval in the country. At Delhi too, batches of 25 to 50 were daily going out as volunteers courting arrest. While the rank and file were boldly resorting to Civil disobedience, the Presidents of the District and Provincial Congress Committee at Delhi were keeping themselves safe at home. I used to go with the Volunteer Corps to see that no amount of provocation forced the people to violence. I was glad to find that

our volunteers remained calm under the greatest provocation. In the meantime I commenced house to house and shop to shop collections for the Delhi Martyrs' Memorial. In spite of repeated requests none of the Delhi Congress leaders helped me in the Collections. My work of Collection was in full swing when I was called away to attend the Congress at Ahmedabad during the last week of December 1921.

The Pandal, the Khadinagar, the Swadeshi exhibition of things, music and men—every thing was superb. Khaddar was never so much in evidence nor did it remain afterwards. You could not distinguish the Punjabi, the Bengali, the Gujarati, the Maratha, the Madrasi &c., from each other until they spoke and acted. Gandhi Cap and Khaddar Dhoti-Shirt was the order of the day. Political enthusiasm was at its highest and the outward exhibition of Unity had reached its culminating point. But signs were not wanting that the decline would begin soon.

The first warning was sounded when the question of condemning the Moplahs for their atrocities on Hindus came up in the Subjects Committee. The original resolution condemned the Moplahs wholesale for the killing of Hindus and burning of Hindu homes and the forcible conversions to Islam. The Hindu members themselves proposed amendments till it was reduced to condemning only certain individuals who had been guilty of the above crimes. But some of the Muslim leaders could not bear this even. Maulana Fakhir and other Maulanas, of course, opposed the resolution and there was no wonder. But I was surprised when an out and out Nationalist

like Maulana Hasarat Mohani opposed the resolution on the grounds that as the Mopla country no longer remained *Dar-ul-Aman* but became *Dar-ul-harab* and as they suspected the Hindus of collision with the British enemies of the Moplahs, therefore the Moplahs were right in presenting the Quran or sword to the Hindus. And if the Hindus became Musalmans to save themselves from death, it was a voluntary change of faith and not forcible conversion.—Well even the harmless resolution condemning some of the Moplahs was not unanimously passed but had to be accepted by a majority of votes only. There were other indications also shewing that the Musalmans considered the Congress to be existing on their sufferance and if there was the least attempt to ignore their idiosyncracies the superficial unity would be snapped asunder.

There was great difference between Gandhiji of 1st December whom I met at Surat and the Mahatmaji whose Darshan I had on reaching Ahmedabad on the 23rd of the same month. At Surat he appeared to be cast down: at Ahmedabad he was soaring in the heavens, because the British bureaucracy had helped him by their repressive policy.

And this exuberance of spirit led the Mahatmaji into another Himalayan blunder for which there is no space today.

XXI

THE FIRST DICTATOR

WHILE preparations for the holding of the Congress session at Ahmedabad were almost complete under the personal guidance of the then spiritual King of India, the Viceroy of the Temporal power was making preparations for the reception of the Prince of Wales at Calcutta. Lord Reading had invited the Prince of Wales relying on the words of Malaviyaji that His Royal Highness would have an enthusiastic reception by the people, but when he reached Calcutta he again found that the visit of the Prince was likely to be more completely boycotted there than even at Bombay and Madras. Lord Reading thought of coming to some terms with the leaders of the people. The late Deshbandhu C. R. Das was taken from jail to the Governor's place in the night, and was offered terms for calling off the hartal, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Babu Shyam Sunder Chakravarty were consulted and wires were exchanged with Mahatma Gandhi. Although Das, Nehru, Lalaji, Azad and a host of other prominent leaders had only recently been clapped up in jail and had offered a willing sacrifice, yet I knew it as a fact that almost all of the Congress leaders were ready for some understanding with the Government if only the initiative was taken by the King's representative and a fitting occasion had arrived. I read the whole telegraphic correspondence on reaching Ahmedabad and

my impression is that if Mahatmaji had not put down his foot on the negotiations, the leaders on the spot would have welcomed any honorable compromise with the Government. Even after the *hartal* Malaviyaji and Mr. Jinnah came with a message from Calcutta. In the night some fifty workers and more met informally and Mr. Jinnah urged a compromise with all the force at his command in a persuasive little speech, the majority of those present were moved and it was decided that Malaviyaji would place the proposal before the Subjects Committee the next day. But when the next day came and after urging his plea with a sweet silver tongue Malaviyaji had impressed the greater portion of his audience with the reasonableness of his proposal, he, most injudiciously, began a panegyric of Lord Reading, the whole aspect of the affair was changed and the proposal was almost unanimously lost. But I am sure that if Mahatmaji had allowed sufficient time to others for a discussion, something favourable to future would have been the result.

A logical consequence of brushing aside Malaviyaji's proposal of compromise was the memorable Ahmedabad resolution, by virtue of which Mahatma Gandhi was named the first Dictator on emergency arising, with power to name his successor if arrested and every succeeding dictator was given the power to appoint his successor. How this proposal was piloted by Mahatmaji is not forgotten by those who took part in that memorable controversy. The Maharashtra party had come prepared to oppose the proposition but Gandhiji, like a consummate strategist, postponed the discussion to the next day

and in the meantime met the Tilakites in the night. The whole attitude of that party was changed and in the next meeting of the Subjects Committee Mr. Abhyankar, who roared like a lion the first day, was almost dumb the next day. Whoever opposed the Mahatma's motion was taken aside and succumbed to the magic spell of the Mahatma's personal appeal. Then it was demanded by a strong minority, who had conscientious scruples as to the appointment of a dictator but subscribed heartily to the Civil Disobedience of the Criminal Amendment Rules, that the resolution be split up and votes taken separately on the question of appointment of successive dictators. I was also one of those objectors. We were ready to appoint Mahatmaji as Dictator but were against allowing him or his successors to appoint their own successors without the sanction of the Working Committee. But Mahatmaji's handling of the situation was again successful and the resolution was passed by a majority, although a substantial number of members remained not voting. We could not but accept the challenge of Government in inaugurating oppressive measures but could not conscientiously accept the indiscriminate appointment of dictators.

Well, the resolution drafted by Mahatmaji was passed by an overwhelming majority in the open Session mainly because no amendment to the resolution could be moved there.

There was a little flutter in the open Session when Maulana Hasrat Mohani stood up to move his proposal for the attainment of Swarajya by going out of the British Empire and 'hear-hear' began to be heard from several corners. But a simple, statesmanlike speech by

the idol of the people demolished the structure Mr. Mohani had raised up.

Deshbandhu Chitranjan Das, the president-elect was in jail ; at the recommendation of Mahatmaji, Hakeem Ajmal Khan had been appointed to officiate for him, but the actual business was transacted by Mahatmaji. When the Subjects Committee met to elect a Working Committee, Mahatmaji pressed for appointing Members who could completely co-operate with the first Dictator. Shri Vithalbhai Patel moved that members nominated by Mahatma Gandhi be accepted ; Mr. Jamnadas Mehta seconded. To me it appeared they wanted to shew Mahatmaji the unreasonability of his demand. But Mahatmaji took them seriously and retired to nominate members. That was the first step towards dictatorship. The second was the ultimatum to the Government of India for inaugurating Mass Civil Disobedience in Bardoli after the lapse of 15 days.

As Lala Lajpat Rai was in Jail, the Punjab delegates wanted me to go with them while Hakeem Ajmal Khan wanted me at Delhi. I referred them both to Mahatmaji who decided in favour of Delhi. As I had come from Delhi at a time when collections by me for the Martyrs' Memorial fund were in full force, I wanted to go back at once, but I had given previous promises to the Aryasamajes at Bombay, Akola and some other places in Berar to join their Anniversary Meetings.

So, I left for Bombay on the evening of 30th December but before leaving I asked Gandhiji whether he had fixed any date for beginning Mass Civil Disobedience at Bardoli. He told me that he had not decided yet. But

when I reached Bombay I read his ultimatum in the papers as also his assumption of *de facto* Dictatorship by writing authoritatively in Young India. What my mental attitude about his doings was will appear from the following preface to an article which I sent to Bombay papers :

" *The Dictator asserting himself.* The Working Committee of the Indian National Congress is still in working order ; yet Mahatma Gandhi has thought fit to issue his dictum on the attitude of those who insist upon complete independence as the goal of Indian aspirations at the present moment. Perhaps Mahatmaji thinks that the time for him to assume complete dictatorship has arrived. This was the misgiving which troubled me, with several others, at Ahmedabad. And had not Mahatmaji very skilfully succeeded in inducing those who had moved the amendment about dictatorships to withdraw it and to concentrate themselves on the whole resolution being thrown out by the house which, he must have known, was impossible, the amendment could have been moved in open Congress. Disagreeing as I do, with Mahatma Gandhi in several details of non-violent non-co-operation (non-violence in thought, word and deed being, in my opinion, the essence of the whole movement) and strongly deprecating his temerity in giving authoritative expression to his personal views on the principles of Hindu religion without having studied its Gospels in original, I have still worked with him because it is his movement alone in which lies, in my opinion, the salvation of our Motherland at the present moment. But, all the respect and veneration which I have for his divine character cannot restrain me from protesting against his recent *communi-*

que which has appeared in Young India of 5th January 1922."

Before the arrival of the date of Bardoli Satyagrah, Pt. Malaviyaji called a Round Table Conference of the different political parties in the country and the Bardoli Satyagrah was adjourned till January 31st. Malaviyaji's Round Table Conference was again an utter failure. But before they met at Bombay I wrote twice to Mahatma Gandhi from Akola telling him plainly that a majority of the Congress leaders appeared to be anxious for some kind of compromise and therefore he would do well to relax a little in his stiff attitude.

When the further period of grace was about to expire, Mahatmaji called a meeting of workers at Bardoli on 29th January 1922 and after having passed a resolution for starting Mass Civil Disobedience in right earnest sent his memorable ultimatum to the Viceroy.

XXII

THE FATE OF MEMORIAL COLLECTION

I RETURNED from my tour in the South on the exact date laid down by Hakeem Ajmal Khan Saheb. At Ahmedabad he told my Arya brethren that he could spare me till 20th January 1922 and they were not the men to release me before that date. So I reached Delhi on the morning of 20th January. On the 21st I again left my Ashram for collection of funds for the Delhi Martyrs' Memorial. In the way I stopped to see Dr. Ansari at his Dispensary near the Fatehpuri Masjid and I was astounded to hear from him that they had begun collection for the Angora fund, that they (Hakeem Saheb and himself) had, so far collected fifty thousand rupees and no other collection should stand in their way till they had completed their *quota* of one lakh.

The cause of my astonishment was this. I had already exhausted my work among the Hindus and the rest of the money was to be collected from the Muslim gentlemen among whom I had begun my begging campaign, when I had to leave for Ahmedabad at the earnest importunity of Hakeem Saheb. Well, I made a show of begging work but I found that Dr. M. A. Ansari had already anticipated me and told all the Muslim sympathisers of the Congress not to respond to my call, till one lakh had been collected towards the Angora fund.

Then I asked Hakeem Saheb and Dr. Ansari to allow

me to begin Satyagrah against the Criminal Amendment Act. I was told that they would not allow Satyagrah to begin in Delhi until a thousand Volunteers had been enlisted after taking the new oath. I enquired of the enlisting officer the exact number of those already enlisted and it appeared their number exceeded 12,000 souls. I again went to Dr. Ansari, who was President of the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee, and asked his permission to begin work, but he was ready with a new excuse. He said that companies were being formed and naiks, etc. being nominated. Then it was lieutenants and after that captains had to be elected. Every time that I saw Dr. Ansari, his reply was that when a Commander-in-Chief was appointed he would call me to give my blessing to the whole army and then Satyagrah would begin.

In the meantime the ladies at Delhi had formed their own Volunteer Corps and asked me to go to the District Congress Office and give them my blessing. On going to the Congress office I found about 60 ladies there to whom I distributed the Volunteer badges and gave my hearty blessing. There was not a single Muslim lady amongst them. On enquiry I found that some of the Muslim ladies were ready to join if only Mrs. Ajmal Khan and Mrs. Ansari would lead the way but those ladies could not go out.

Having got my blessing, the ladies' corps began to tour through the city singing patriotic songs and calling upon the citizens of Delhi to observe complete hartal on the arrival of the Prince of Wales. In the capacity of President of the Hindu Gorakshini Sabha, I sent round posters asking for Hartal at the arrival of the Prince who

had come to strengthen the hands of the bureaucracy which sanctioned cow-killing in the cantonments and for the civil population and for the purpose of trade in hides and preserved beef. But the army of Congress volunteers never came out, and on the day fixed for getting my blessing for the disciplined National Army, Mr. Abbas Hussain Quary came with the Bardoli resolution and everything was over.

I may remark, in passing, that the President of the Provincial and District Congress Committee at Delhi all along remained in touch with the authority at Delhi through a Muslim Government Pensioner who is well-known but who should be allowed to remain nameless.

Such was the situation at Delhi when Gandhiji had already published his ultimatum addressed to the Viceroy before beginning Satyagrah and the Viceroy's reply had also become public properly. I was disgusted with the doings of the Delhi Congress leaders and penned the following letter to Mahatma Gandhi :—

Delhi, 7th February 1922

Revered Mahatmaji,

I am again writing to you today. I read your letter addressed to the Viceroy. If there is not complete preparation for Satyagrah in Bardoli, I do not understand why so much hurry about it. Compared to that Delhi is not the least prepared for mass civil disobedience. I read the reply of the Viceroy also. It is full of fallacious arguments. He has faith in his physical strength.

I will only stay here till the arrival of the Prince. The leaders here do not want to move at all. The contracts of spirits and intoxicating drugs were auctioned.

It did not move anybody. I have distributed posters on behalf of the Hindu Sabha for complete Hartal, but as long as the Presidents of the District and Provincial Congress Committees do not give their sanction, nothing can be done.

There is no work here for opposing the repressive policy of the Government. Ladies are going in procession while males are hiding their faces in their homes. Therefore I cannot be useful in this work. And as for mass civil disobedience, in which the principal item is the readiness for non-payment of taxes, Delhi is neither ready with the propaganda of wearing Khaddar, spinning charkhas and weaving on pitlooms nor has the Congress succeeded in removing disgust towards the Untouchables; what to talk of the possibility of a calm atmosphere. Besides this I do not agree with many of the remaining items of non-co-operation.

For these reasons I shall leave Delhi either on 15th or 16th of February, 1922 and retire for writing a history of the Aryasamaj. That God may help you in the attainment of complete Swaraj as He has blessed your efforts in infusing a spirit of Truth, Fearlessness and True Liberty in the Indian people, is my humble prayer.

I do not agree in the concluding portion of your letter (to the Viceroy) in which you make new demands. The meaning of it will be that there could be no mutual understanding."

And now let me give my own version of the results of the Bardoli affair.

On 13th October 1921 Gandhiji wrote in Young India an article under the heading—" The fear of death."

In the course of that article he wrote :—

"When we attain Swaraj many of us will have given up the fear of death....Till now mostly young boys have died in the cause. Those who died in Aligarh were all below 21. No one knew who they were. If Government resort to firing now, I am hoping that some men of the first rank will have the opportunity of offering up the supreme sacrifice."

Again when repression was in full swing and Jails were being filled up by non-violent non-co-operating patriots, Gandhiji wrote in Young India of 22nd December, 1921 :—"A cautious friend....tells me that suffering has only just begun, that for the ends in view we must pay a much higher price still. He really expects that we shall have to invite a repetition of Jallianwalas .....I assure the friend that my optimism has room for all these things and much worse than he can imagine. But I perceive, too, that if India remains calm and unperturbed and does not retaliate even mentally—a very difficult process, I admit, and yet not so difficult in India's present exalted mood—our very preparedness and consequent absence of reaction will exhaust the brute spirit for want of nutrition, and Lord Reading instead of talking big things to us, will himself adopt the human language of penitence and see ample occasion in Indian atmosphere for a new diplomacy."

The misery of the whole situation was that the "ifs" of the Mahatma were almost always ignored even by educated men, and the conditions laid down by the optimistic Mahatma being completely ignored, the followers, without resorting to introspection, took it for granted that

what Mahatmaji expected of them had actually become an accomplished fact.

After the collapse of the Malaviya Conference at Bombay, the Bardoli Satyagrah Committee of which Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel had been appointed President by Mahatma Gandhi—met at Bardoli, of which a report appeared in Young India dated 2nd February, 1922. Let me cull a few extracts from it :—"There was an audience of *Khaddar*-clad representatives numbering 4,000 (The whole population of Bardoli being 85,000). There were 500 women, a large majority of whom were also in Khaddar....I took the sense of the meeting on every one of the conditions separately. They understood the implications.....There was one dissentient voice on the question of untouchability. He said, what I said was right in theory but it was difficult in practice to break down the custom all of a sudden. I drove the point home that the audience had made up its mind."

I have already shewn in a previous article that untouchability had not gone out of Bardoli. Those, who met the untouchables in public meeting before Gandhiji, bathed with their clothes on when they returned home. Gandhiji had his own doubts about the fulfilment of the promises of Bardoli people and writes in the same article:

"Before that (public) meeting, Vithalbhai Patel, some workers and I conferred together and felt that we should pass a resolution postponing the decision for about a fortnight, to make the Swadeshi preparation more certain by actually having untouchable children in all the sixty National Schools. The brave and earnest workers of Bardoli will not listen to the postponement. They

were certain that more than 50 per cent of the Hindu population were *quite ready* about untouchability and they were *sure of being able* to manufacture enough Khaddar for their future wants. They were bent on trying conclusions with the Government."

I was sorry to see Mahatmaji carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment. Being quite ready did not mean that the goal had actually been reached.

Chauri-Chaura was written in the destiny of the Indian Nation and it came like a thunderbolt. The reaction would not have been so crushing if preparations had not been announced with a flourish of trumpets. Before leaving his Sabarmati Ashram for Bardoli, Mahatma Gandhi met more than a quarter lakh of people in the sands on the banks of Sabarmati river. The occasion was unique. The loin-cloth clad uncrowned King of the people speaking in burning words with all the strength at his command :—" I wish there were several Jallianwalas in Gujarat. I wish I would be killed by the British bullets. I wish Gujaratis be killed in large numbers by British bullets. . . .and so on." When that simple speech of about five sentences was flashed by wire, the whole country was electrified. But the collapse was terrible.

I was, all along, against taking any hasty steps and when, even after reading the Chauri Chaura tragedy in the papers Mahatma Gandhi went on with his rejoinder to Lord Reading and published it, I sent the following telegram to Gandhiji, at Bardoli :—

" Horrible Chauri Chaura affair. Kindly stop aggressive propaganda. Call All-India meeting Delhi. Devise new programme."

XXIII

THE A. I. C. C. AT DELHI

THE Bardoli Working Committee resolution passed on 11th February 1922 was simple enough. It called back all the activities undertaken under the pledge of non-violent non-co-operation including offensive preparations for mass civil disobedience. It said :—" The suspension of Mass Civil Disobedience shall be continued till the atmosphere is so non-violent as to ensure the non-repetition of popular atrocities such as at Gorakhpur or hooliganism such as at Bombay and Madras respectively on the 17th November 1921 and 13th January last (1922)." After putting the resolution in full the Working Committee ruled :—" The foregoing resolutions will have effect only pending the meeting to be especially convened of the All-India Congress Committee and thereafter subject to confirmation by it, the Secretary to call such meeting as early as possible after consultation with Hakim Ajmal Khan (the *de jure* President at the time.")

On the 12th February, 1922, another meeting of the Working Committee was held and the well-known constructive programme was formulated.

A meeting of the A. I. C. C. for confirming the above resolutions was called for the 24th and 25th of February, 1922, at Delhi. On the morning of 24th Gandhiji called a meeting of select leaders only because he wanted to read, in their presence, the protests which he had received

against the Working Committee's Bardoli resolution from leaders like C. R. Das, Pandit Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai and from Gandhiji's faithful disciples like Mahadeva Desai and George Joseph who were rotting in Jail. I need not go into details as to the bitter complaints that they made and the disappointment that they felt at Mahatmaji's utter failure to grasp the situation. The leaders out of Jail and the rank and file also came prepared to press either for a partial revival of the four or five boycotts or for a complete change of programme. Mahatmaji had called a consultative body of select leaders but there was a large gathering among whom two C.I.D. men also forced their way and it was with difficulty that I got them excluded.

The deliberations began. Seeing a revulsion of feeling among many, Mahatmaji adopted a temporizing policy. Gradually some kinds of boycotts began to be allowed and the Bardoli Working Committee resolution as amended by Gandhiji stood finally as follows.—" The All-India Congress Committee having carefully considered the resolution passed by the Working Committee at its meeting on the 11th and 12th instant, confirms the said resolutions noted therein and—

" Further resolves that individual civil disobedience whether of a defensive or aggressive character may be commenced in respect of particular places or particular laws at the instance of and upon permission being granted therefor by the respective Provincial Committee, provided that such Civil Disobedience shall not be permitted unless all the conditions laid down by the Congress or

the A. I. C. C. or the Working Committee are strictly fulfilled.

"Reports having been received from various quarters that picketing regarding foreign cloth is as necessary as liquor picketing, the A. I. C. C. authorizes such picketing of a *bona-fide* character on the same terms as liquor picketing mentioned in the Bardoli resolutions. The A. I. C. C. wishes it to be understood that the resolutions of the Working Committee do not mean any abandonment of the original Congress Programme of non-co-operation or permanent abandonment of Mass Civil Disobedience, but considers that an atmosphere of necessary mass non-violence can be established by the workers concentrating upon the constructive programme framed by the Working Committee.

" The A. I. C. C. holds Civil Disobedience to be the right and duty of the people to be exercised and performed whenever the State opposes the declared will of the people."

When the above amended resolution was placed before the A. I. C. C. in the evening, amendments poured down like mushrooms and the members began to give vent to their feelings. While others were simply advocating a reversion to non-co-operation pure and simple, Dr. B. S. Moonje of Nagpur utilized the occasion for urging the शठं प्रति शठं कुर्यात् सादरं प्रति सादरम् policy i.e. 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' and quoted the well-known verse of Mahabharat :—

यस्मिन् यथावर्तते यो मनुष्यः ।
तस्मिन् तथा वर्तितव्यम् स धर्मः ॥

मायाचारो मायया बाधितव्यः ।
साध्वाचारः साधुना प्रत्युपेयः ॥

This verse means, in a nutshell, that falsehood should not be attempted to be conquered by Truth, but by diplomacy. He urged a complete change of programme and urged for an enquiry into the whole scheme of work of the Congress. Gandhiji again played the same game as was tried at the Ahmedabad Congress and advised the proposers of amendments to consult with Mr. Vithalbhai Patel, the officiating General Secretary, and reduce all their propositions to a general amendment because their several amendments overlapped each other. And for this purpose the sitting was adjourned for the next day. And it was wisely done; because Dr. Moonje and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya had made some impression upon the audience and if those amendments had been put to vote immediately, the result was uncertain.

I had also proposed an amendment, which ran as follows :—

1. "Add the following at the end of today's additional resolution :—The All-India Congress Committee further rules that the Congress shall not be responsible for any violence committed by persons outside the Congress organization and in case of any individual members of the Congress being guilty of violence he shall be expelled from all Congress Committees and bodies.

If the above amendment is rejected I move :—

2. That all civil disobedience whether individual or mass, be abandoned for the future."

The next day I, too, went to Dr. Ansari's place where

Gandhiji and Vithalbhai had put up. The other movers of amendments were easily induced to withdraw their proposals but all the arguments of Mr. Vithalbhai failed to convince me. Then there was no other resource left for him but to take me to Mahatmaji. Malaviyaji, Mr. T. Prakasam and some other leaders were sitting with him at the time. All the arguments advanced by Mahatmaji, also, failed to induce me to withdraw. My chief objection was a conscientious one. I did not believe that "an atmosphere of necessary mass non-violence could be established by the workers concentrating upon the constructive programme" alone as long as the C.I.D. was there to work mischief. Further, I did not believe that an atmosphere for Mass Civil Disobedience could be manufactured. For these reasons I could not agree to withdraw the amendment. At the end Mahatmaji appealed to my sense of the ridiculous. He said—"Nobody will support you in the meeting and it will be a shame for me to see my Bhai Saheb's amendment thrown away for want of proper support."

I had got promise of support from a decent minority, which included, among others, Baba Kharak Singh, the singleminded austere patriot President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee; but the only reply I gave was—"Mahatma! You alone have not the monopoly of conscience. I, too, have a conscience and if by acting according to its dictates I am reduced to a minority of one, I shall only be following you in standing to my guns." But Mahatmaji still wanted me to withdraw. I asked whether my insistence would hamper work in the Committee. All the talk was in Hindi and I am giving

a gist of it. Mahatmaji replied in his usual straightforward manner—" Hum ko meeting main harakkat hogi." I at once gave in and promised to withdraw my amendment in the open session, but said at the same time that I shall have nothing to do with the active work of the Congress after that.

Accordingly I retired to resume my literary work at Kurukshetra and sent in my formal resignation from all executive work of the Congress, on 12th March, 1922, to Dr. Ansari, the President of the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee.

XXIV

MAHATMAJI JAILED

I HAD no intention of parading all the incidents relating to the circumstances under which I withdrew my amendment but when Mr. Vithalbhai Patel, in the capacity of General Secretary of the A.I.C.C., gave out in public that I withdrew my amendment without giving any reasons, I had to send the whole account to the press. Different interpretations were being put on my amendments. In the *Young India* of 2nd March, 1922, Mahatmaji gave his own version of my attitude. He wrote : " I hold that Swami Shraddhanandaji has been needlessly criticised for the proposition he intended to move. His argument is absolutely honest. He thinks that we, as a body, do not really believe in non-violence even as a policy. Therefore we shall never fulfil the programme of non-violence. Therefore, he says, let us go to the Councils, and get what crumbs we may. He was trying to shew the unreality of the position of those who believe in the policy with their lips, whereas they are looking forward to violence for final deliverance. I do say that, if Congressmen do not fully believe in the policy, they are doing an injury to the country pretending to follow it. If violence is to be the basis of future Government, Councillors are undoubtedly the wisest. For it is through the Councils that by the same devices by which the present administrators rule us, the Councillors hope to seize power from the former's hand."

Mahatma Gandhi saw with an unerring eye my actual position because I had frequently pointed out to him how his most devoted colleagues nursed the idea of ultimately obtaining Swaraj by violence and how they considered the policy of non-violent non-co-operation simply as a bluff to induce the bureaucracy to enter into some compromise with them. And this is the reason why I am against the Swarajya party contesting seats in the coming elections. Their theory, however grandiloquently expressed, does not tally with their practice. And if Mahatma Gandhi has not changed his views since he wrote on 2nd March, 1922, he ought to advise the Swarajists to leave the Responsive Co-operationists, Independent Congressionists and half a dozen others of that ilk, severely alone to go to the Councils for paying the bureaucracy in its own coin, and to work the constructive programme in order to bring about an atmosphere of non-violence in mind, speech and practice.

Let me quote another excerpt from Gandhi's writings in *Young India* of 2nd March 1922 :

" A friend warned me against exploiting my dictatorship. He little knew that I had never once used it.... Far from my consciously or unconsciously exploiting my dictatorship, I have begun to wonder if I am not unconsciously allowing myself to be 'exploited.' I confess I have a dread of it such as I never had before."

It is literally true that at the A. I. C. C. meeting of 24th and 25th February, 1922, at Delhi, Gandhiji was actually exploited. Advantage was taken of his conscientious weakness and he was compelled to submit to the whims of his colleagues against his better judgment. A

Dictator, to be successful, ought to be made of harder and sterner stuff than the Saint of Sabarmati.

To continue my story. Dr. M. A. Ansari went to attend the Provincial Political Congress at Ajmere where Mahatmaji was to preside and brought a message from him in order to induce me not to press my resignation. The message said that Gandhiji was thinking of a future programme according to which the campaign of mass Civil Disobedience, when once started, will never come to a stop until Swaraj was obtained. But on his return from Ajmere Mahatmaji was arrested and finally convicted on 18th March, 1922.

The text of my resignation dated 12th March, 1922, was as follows :

" I am leaving Delhi for Kurukshetra tomorrow and will not be able to take part in any of the Congress deliberations in the near future. I believe that time will never come when a non-violent calm atmosphere, according to the high ideal propounded by Mahatma Gandhi, could be produced among the Indian masses and therefore to agree to the proposition that Civil Disobedience of laws could be started at all in the near future, would, for me, be acting against my conscience. Moreover, I differ from the Working Committee in my attitude towards some items of the non-co-operation propaganda. I, therefore, beg to resign from all offices in the Congress organization. It might, perhaps, be urged that now that Mahatmaji has been snatched away from us by the bureaucracy I should forget my difference of opinion. But at the time of withdrawing my amendment from the A. I. C. C. meeting, I made it perfectly clear to Mahatmaji

that consistently with my beliefs I could no longer remain in the executive of the organization and I would be true neither to Mahatmaji nor to myself if any such consideration could stand in the way of the discharge of what I consider to be my duty."

Dr. Ansari told me, when I met him next, that he would not put my resignation before the Provincial Congress Committee and urged me not to insist upon it. Then I was invited to join the Punjab Conference at Batala, where Mr. Patel urged that it was the opinion of Mahatmaji only and was not supported by any resolution of the Working Committee or the A.I.C.C. that a man holding my views should leave the executive bodies. Mr. Patel and other leaders made it clear to me that the majority agreed with my view that we could not be responsible for violence occurring outside Congress organisation. On this I agreed to work for the constructive programme and again urged the Congress to take up the question of removal of untouchability.

I was engaged in my literary work at Kurukshetra and it was from that place that I left for Batala on the morning of 24th April, 1922, and on my way broke journey at Ludhianah, Jalandhar and Batala, trying to put life into Congress workers and delivering public lectures. The Punjab Provincial Conference at Batala lasted from 28th to 30th April, 1922. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Vithalbhai Patel, Mr. Abbas Tyabji, Lala Duni Chand and all the Punjab leaders were there and all pressed me to help them because it was a mistake to treat Mahatma Gandhi's opinion as the dictum of the Congress itself. What weighed with me specially was the in-

carceration of Gandhiji in Jail which had damped the spirit of the Indian people. I agreed to make a tour of the Punjab for rousing the Congress workers to a sense of their duty and lead them to the completion of the constructive programme, and delivered two lectures at Batala on the concluding day of the Conference. On my way back I again spoke at Amritsar and passed some days at Delhi and Kurukshetra for recuperation of my health. On 18th May I was called to Ambala because it was the date of Mahatmaji's being sentenced and it had been unanimously resolved to celebrate the 18th of every month in order to pray for the speedy restoration of Mahatmaji to his people. I mention this occasion with a specific purpose. Gandhiji had ruled that one Karor (ten million rupees) which was collected up to June 1921 ought to be spent within one year. He was not for having a funded capital for Congress work. He held that hoarding money was one source of disunity and creation of parties. The Indian people, he said, was their funded capital and their श्रद्धा (faith) was the interest which should be collected and spent every year. His motto appeared to be :

घर बार दे दफनको कौडी न रख कफनको ।
जिसने दिया है तनका, देगा वही कफनका ॥

And his devoted followers were determined to act up to his advice ! They spent money like water, an illustration of which was related to me by the Secretary. Ambala is only 26 miles from Kurukshetra and I travelled inter class as it was day time. I reached Ambala Cantonment at 1 p.m., delivered one lecture among ladies,

motored in a private car to the city where I spoke in a public meeting and returning to the Cantonment at 8 p.m. gave a discourse and remained in the meeting up to 11 in the night. But when I went to the Railway Station the next morning my surprise was great when two first class tickets were handed over to me, one for myself and the other for the Manager of the Kurukshetra Gurukula, who had accompanied me. I insisted on the tickets being changed to a lower class. The Secretary appeared dissatisfied and complained that I did not allow them to serve me. After a great deal of haggling the truth came out. The Secretary named a leader, who will be nameless here, who arrived, by the same train as I came by, last month, who left the same night by a midnight train, for whom a special motor car was engaged which cost them Rs. 200 and whose travelling and other expenses came up to Rs. 250 or more. The Secretary urged me to accept a purse which, of course, I refused. I was astounded and told him not to play fast and loose with public money. After that I found in several places that the Congress workers had obeyed Gandhiji to the letter and had paid no attention to the spirit of his noble advice.

After paying visits to three more places, I went to attend the A.I.C.C. meeting at Lucknow. On the way I stopped to organize a Sadhu Mahamandal at Hardwar, the foundation of which had been laid at Ahmedabad during the Congress Session. I reached Lucknow on the morning of the 6th June.

I had gone to Lucknow to press my proposal for the appointment of a Sub-Committee for the removal of untouchability in the meeting of the A.I.C.C. Members

from all parts of the country were assembled. My proposal came out of the Working Committee a little mutilated but in the A.I.C.C. meeting I again restored its chief feature. The chief work for which the meeting was called appeared to be to devise means for removing the general depression which had set in after the removal of Mahatma Gandhi to jail. In the meeting, leaders from Bengal and other places were pressing for starting Mass Civil Disobedience again on a larger scale because, they said, the trust of the people could only be restored by this means. Mr. Sen Gupta was considered to be the successor of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das, who was in jail, and I asked his opinion in private, as he had not opened his mouth in the meeting. His reply was an eye-opener for me. He said : " The people are not at all ready for Civil Disobedience, whether individual or mass; but if I am asked to give my opinion in open meeting I, too, shall roar like a lion." I consulted others in private and all agreed as to the futility of trying to stick to Civil Disobedience and wanted a change of programme ; but the question was—who was to bell the cat ? Pt. Motilal had just come out of jail and the united wisdom of the leaders, among whom Malaviyaji was prominent, drafted a resolution appointing a Committee of enquiry and thus postponing the day of reckoning. I protested against another waste of money. Swami Satyadeva and a few others supported me. The philosopher of Benares, Pandit Bhagwandas M.A. came out with a very practical programme of work which, in my opinion, would have saved the situation and would have made the rise of the Swaraj party unnecessary. But who would care for the most

practical proposals of a philosopher who feared to push himself forward to public notice. The leaders were determined to leave the rank and file in futile hopes rather than face their discontentment boldly and the resolution for spending some thousands more on a fruitless enquiry was passed by an overwhelming majority. The result of the enquiry was foreseen by all of us. When the members of the board had already made up their minds before going out, the result could well be foreseen. It is a matter of history how advantage was taken, of their own dictum, by the members of the Committee of enquiry in launching a new party with a view to remove the clog of non-co-operation out of the way of Council entry and responsive co-operation. As regards the fate of my proposal for taking measures for the removal of untouchability—it will require a separate article for itself.

XXV

REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

THE following correspondence will show how my efforts for working the constructive programme were frustrated:

My first letter

To

The General Secretary,
All-India Congress Committee,
Camp DELHI

I acknowledge with thanks, receipt of your letters No. 331 and 332 embodying resolutions of the Working Committee and of the A.I.C.C. about untouchability. I observe with pain that the Resolution of the A.I.C.C. as at present worded, does not include the whole of what was passed by the Committee.

The facts are these. I sent the following letter to Mr. Vithalbhai Patel (the then) General Secretary, on 23rd May, 1922, which was also published by the principal Dailies of the country.

'My dear Mr. Patel,

There was a time (vide *Young India* of 25th May, 1921) when Mahatmaji put the question of untouchability in the forefront of the Congress programme. I find now that the question of raising the depressed classes has been

relegated to an obscure corner. While Khadi claims the attention of some of our best workers and a liberal sum (Rs. 17 lakhs) has been earmarked for it for the year, while a strong sub-committee has been appointed to look after national education and a special appeal for funds is to be made for the same, the question of the removal of untouchability has been shelved by making small grants to Ahmedabad, Ahmednagar and Madras. I am of opinion that with a majority of six crores of our brethren set against us by the bureaucracy even the Khadi Scheme cannot succeed completely. The Members of the Working Committee, perhaps, do not know that on this side our depressed brethren are leaving off Khadi and taking to buying cheap foreign cloth. I want to move the following resolution in the meeting of the A.I.C.C., which comes off on the 7th of June next at Lucknow, that "A sub-committee consisting of three members of the A.I.C.C., be appointed to give effect to the resolution about the so-called depressed classes, that a sum of five lakhs of rupees be placed at their disposal for propaganda work and that in future all applications for grants be referred to the said sub-committee for disposal." My proposal was amended by the Working Committee and ran as follows :—

" This Committee hereby appoint a committee consisting of Swami Shraddhanand, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Messrs G. B. Deshpande and I. K. Yajnik to formulate a scheme embodying practical measures to be adopted for bettering the condition of the so-called untouchables throughout the country and to place it for consideration before the next meeting of the Working Committee, the

amount to be raised for the scheme to be Rs. 2 lakhs for the present."

Mr. Patel asked me to accept the Working Committee's proposed resolution in toto. I refused to accept the Working Committee's resolution and in the very first sitting of the A. I. C. C. substituted 5 lakhs for 2 lakhs with the condition that one lakh of the same be allotted by the A. I. C. C. out of the funds in cash and an appeal be made for the balance.

Mr. Rajagopalachariar, on behalf of the Working Committee, proposed that instead of fixing the amount to be allotted out of the Congress funds now, it should be provided that when the scheme was accepted by the Working Committee that committee would allot as much as it could then spare for this purpose. I do not recollect the exact words but the purport of the amendment as given above is, to my knowledge, correct.

On this an uproar arose and a query was pressed from all sides that the cash balance in the hands of the A.I.C.C. ought to be announced. The President (Hakeem Ajmal Khan) called me aside and told me in confidence that the Congress possessed very little cash balance and if pressed to disclose the true state of affairs it would harm the movement as outsiders and even C. I. D. people were present. On this I accepted the amendment of Mr. Rajagopalachariar in spite of protests from my seconder and supporters. But my surprise was great when I found the resolution in the dailies, as reported by the Associated Press, shorn of Mr. Rajagopalachariar's amendment.

After the above resolution was passed some members suggested that a convener of the sub-committee ought

to be appointed. Several members proposed me as the convener. On this Mr. Vithalbhai Patel (the then General Secretary) got up and said : " As Swami Shraddhanand's name occurs first, naturally he will be the convener and, therefore, there was no need of moving any fresh resolution at all."

Members from all parts of the country began to give information to me about untouchability in their provinces and pressed me to visit their parts. On this I made some promises. Then I thought that without some cash for preliminary expenses no enquiries on the spot could be made and hence no proper scheme formulated. I also learnt that Rs. 25,000 had been voted by the Working Committee for " the Independent " of Allahabad and that an application for the grant of Rs. 100,000 to the Urdu daily " Congress " of Delhi had been placed by Hakeem Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari before the Working Committee. So, considering, that after all the Congress might not be so hard pressed for cash, I wrote a letter addressed to the President asking him to give the untouchability sub-committee an advance of Rs. 10,000 for preliminary expenses.

After all this, the following resolution of the Working Committee forwarded by your letter No. 331 is very interesting reading——

" Read letter from Swami Shraddhanand dated 8-6-1922 for an advance for drawing up a scheme for depressed class work. Resolved that Mr. Gangadhar Rao B. Deshpande be appointed convener of the Sub-committee appointed for this purpose and he be requested to convene a meeting at an early date, and that Swami Shraddhanand's letter be referred to the Sub-committee."

This is another matter which is inexplicable. After my first letter had been acknowledged I addressed the following letter from Hardwar on 3rd June 1922 :—'My dear Mr. Patel, I shall leave Hardwar the day after tomorrow and reach Lucknow on the morning of June 6th. You know that I feel the most for the so-called depressed classes. Even in the Punjab I find that no attention worth the name has been paid to this item of the constructive programme. In the U.P., of course, it will be an uphill work. But there is another very serious difficulty.

The Bardoli programme in its note under item 4 lays down that, where prejudice is still strong separate schools must be maintained out of the Congress funds. This leaves a loophole for those Congress workers who are either prejudiced against the depressed classes or are weak and no work can be done inducing people to agree to allow the untouchables to draw water from common wells. In the Bijnor District, I learn, there was no restriction and the untouchables drew water freely from common wells. But in some places fresh prejudice is being engendered under the aegis of the Bardoli resolution note. In my recent visits to Ambala Cantt, Ludhiana, Batala, Lahore, Amritsar and Jandiala, I found that the question of removal of disabilities of the untouchables is being ignored. In and near Delhi it is the Dalitodhar Sabha of which I am the President, rather than the Congress, which is doing appreciable work. I think that unless item 4 of the Bardoli constructive programme is amended in proper form, the work, which I consider to be the most important plank in the Congress programme, will suffer.

Kindly place the following proposal before the President and, if he allows it to be placed before the next meeting of the A. I. C. C., I shall move it there—" Instead of the note under item 4 of the Bardoli resolution, substitute the following note :—The following demands of the depressed classes ought to be complied with at once, namely that (a) they are allowed to sit on the same carpet with citizens of other classes (b) they get the right to draw water from common wells and (c) their children get admission into National schools and colleges and are to mix freely with students drawn from the so-called higher castes." I want to impress upon the members of the A. I. C. C. the great importance of this item. I know of cases where the depressed classes are in open revolt against the tyranny of the so-called upper castes and unless the above demands are conceded to them they will succumb to the machinations of the bureaucracy. After my first proposals were passed in the A. I. C. C. Meeting, on June 7th, I asked Mr. Patel to put my proposed amendment of Note to item (4) of Bardoli resolution before the meeting. He told me that the Working Committee would refer it to the sub-committee and asked me not to press it there. I agreed. But I have not received a copy of any resolution of the Working Committee, referring my proposal to the untouchability Sub-Committee.

The untouchability question is very acute in and near Delhi and I have to grapple with it at once. But the sub-committee cannot begin work offhand because the Working Committee has to take several other political situations in the country into consideration before deciding upon any scheme of practical measures to be

adopted for uprooting untouchability on behalf of the Congress. Under these circumstances I cannot be of any use to the sub-committee and beg to resign from membership.

Delhi,
June 30th, 1922

Yours sincerely,
Shraddhanand Sanyasi.

Secretary's Reply

Dear Swamiji,

Your letter, dated 30th June, 1922, received in my office on the 30th of that month, has by a resolution of the Working Committee passed in Bombay on the 18th instant been referred to me with instructions to explain facts and request you to be good enough to reconsider your resignation from the Depressed Class Sub-Committee.

As you are aware, I have no personal knowledge of the facts which happened prior to my release from the jail. But I was present at the meeting of the Working Committee which passed the resolution dated 10th June 1922, appointing Mr. Deshpande as the Convener of the sub-committee. It was not then mentioned that there was any understanding about any particular member acting as the convener of the sub-committee and the whole resolution was passed merely to complete the necessary formalities in regard to the payment of money. It was felt that a formal resolution of the sub-committee was necessary before any expenditure could be sanctioned. Mr. Deshpande was accordingly appointed as the convener and a sum of Rs. 500 was voted for the expenses of these preliminary steps. By an oversight the resolution as drafted omitted to mention the sanction of Rs. 500. You

will thus observe that it was not due to the unwillingness of the Working Committee to sanction Rs. 10,000 for untouchability, but the true reason for framing the resolution in the manner it was framed was what I have explained above. Nothing could be farther from the intention of the Working Committee than a desire to underrate the importance of the work your sub-committee was called upon to do or in any way to ignore the valuable advice tendered by you. On your letter being placed before the last meeting of the Working Committee the omission of the grant of Rs. 500 was supplied, and I was instructed to communicate with you on the subject. It will be a great pity if the sub-committee is deprived of the benefit of your experience and special knowledge of the whole question of untouchability and I will ask you, therefore, in public interest to reconsider your decision and wire to my office at Allahabad withdrawing your resignation from the Sub-Committee. I need hardly add that any resolutions arrived at by your Sub-Committee will receive all the consideration they deserve at the hands of the Working Committee.

As to the alteration in the Working Committee's resolution in regard to separate wells and schools the best course would be for your sub-committee to recommend the change and for the Working Committee to adopt it.

I am afraid you are under a misapprehension as regards the grant to "The Independent" of Allahabad and "The Congress" of Delhi. In reference to the former, all that has been done is to sanction the application of the U. P. Provincial Committee to advance as a loan to

the "Nationalist Journals Limited" Rs. 25,000 from the funds already granted to that Committee and in reference to the latter the application for a grant of a loan was wholly rejected.

Yours sincerely,
Motilal Nehru,
General Secretary

Bombay,
July 23rd, 1922

MY REJOINDER

Dear Pandit Motilalji,—I received your letter of 23rd July, 1922, addressed from Bombay anent my resignation from the Untouchability Sub-Committee. I am sorry I am unable to reconsider it because some of the facts brought out by me, in my first letter, have simply been ignored.

(1) Kindly enquire of Mr. Rajagopalachariar whether I did not first propose that at least one lakh should be given in cash out of the funds in the hands of the A. I. C. C., whether he did not move an amendment substituting words for the above which purported to promise that when the plan of work formulated by the Sub-Committee was accepted by the Working Committee that committee would allot as much money for untouchability department as it could then spare and whether I did not accept his amendment when the President called me aside and explained the exact financial position at the time. If this is the fact, then why did the amendment not appear with the resolution?

(2) Did you enquire of Mr. Vithalbhai J. Patel whether the members of the A. I. C. C. did not propose me as the convener of the Sub-Committee and whether he did not then say—"As Swami Shraddhanand's name

occurs first, naturally he will be the convener and therefore there was no need of moving any fresh resolution at all." I enquired about this from Dr. Ansari and he wrote back to me on June 17th, 1922, saying I was appointed convener. Dr. Ansari is with you and you can verify it from him. I hope Mr. Patel has not forgotten all about it.

(3) Then the immediate work among the untouchables here is very urgent, and I cannot delay it for any reason whatever. Kindly have my resignation accepted in the next meeting of the Working Committee, so that I may be free to work out my own plan about the removal of untouchability.

Yours sincerely,
Shraddhananda Sanyasi

To complete the story of the Sub-Committee appointed for the removal of untouchability by the A. I. C. C., there remains only this to be said that the Sub-Committee did no business and in placing the annual report of the Congress before its session at Gaya, the Secretary simply remarked that no work could be done by the Sub-Committee as no substitute for Swami Shraddhananda could be found. Then Rs. 17,000 were allotted to this department in the budget passed at Gaya and Mr. Rajagopalachariar was placed in charge of the work but after a year, at the Cocanada Session of the Congress it appeared that not a single pice out of that allotment had been spent. And to crown all, Maulana Muhammad Ali, the President of the Session, proposed to divide the so-called untouchables in equal halves, between Hindus and the Musalmans.

XXVI

CONGRESS ENQUIRY COMMITTEE

RETURNING to Delhi, from Lucknow on 10th June I began my help to the local District and Provincial Committees. The same day Gyani Sher Singh was given a reception and a Mass Meeting was addressed in the night by me in the Patoudi House Compound. This house had been purchased by me for the Delhi Martyrs' Memorial.

Hakeem Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari, the Presidents of the Delhi District and Provincial Committees, remaining usually absent from the city and Lala Shankar Lal, Mr. Asaf Ali, Dr. Rahman and Mr. Deshbandhu Gupta &c., being in Jail, I had to do my best with the help of some young workers. The majority of the Muslim Volunteers, who had gone to Jail, returned after tendering apologies but when the rest came out in two batches after finishing their full term I made arrangements, at the request of the Delhi Public, to give them a grand reception. I also attended some District Conferences on behalf of Delhi and engaged as I was heart and soul in helping the Depressed Classes, I still found time to help the District and Provincial Committees of Delhi actively and began again collection of funds for the Delhi Martyrs' Memorial.

Before my correspondence with Pandit Motilal Nehru began about the Depressed Classes Sub-Committee, I went to Khorja on 26th June to speak in the Conference over

which Pandit Nehru was called to preside. We came to Delhi together and the Congress Enquiry Committee began work at Dr. Ansari's. The following written statement, which I presented to the Committee, will show clearly my attitude towards the general political condition and wants of the country at the time.

This has been reproduced from the file of a daily paper.

Swami Shraddhanand's written Statement

Calcutta, August 14th, 1922

" In the course of his statement to the Congress Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee, Swami Shraddhanand said that he did not believe in working the constructive programme merely for the purpose of enabling the Congress to launch Civil Disobedience. He believed in working the constructive programme for its own sake and had full faith that if civil disobedience of laws was abandoned, even then, the constructive programme worked with faith and enthusiasm would lead the country to Swaraj. By entering the councils the non-co-operators would be able to work the constructive programme more effectively, but it could only be done usefully if the idea of civil disobedience was abandoned for future. To enter the councils for preparing the country earlier for civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes was a travesty of terms.

Referring to Hindu-Muslim unity he said that outwardly there was no friction but he had noticed in all the provinces that in their hearts the Hindu and the Muhammedan communities have become suspi-

cious of each other. One reason appeared to be that while the Muhammadans and Sikhs were organised among themselves, the Hindus, as a body, were disorganised. The remedy to his mind lay in Hindu leaders organising their own community and the Muhammadan leaders laying more stress on the attainment of Swaraj than purely upon Khilafat.

In reply to another question he said that his impressions were that while the spirit of non-violence appeared outwardly to be professed, in their hearts people did not believe in non-violence and their speech and mind were full of violent ideas.

Speaking for the Delhi province he considered that the province was not ready for civil disobedience either in part or as a whole.

His opinion was that individual civil disobedience or isolated mass civil disobedience could do no good to the movement. If civil disobedience was to be launched, it must begin simultaneously in all the provinces. But before doing that it ought to be distinctly advertised by the Congress that it would not be responsible for any violence which was committed by any person or body of persons outside the Congress organisations. The Congress should on no account stop its work of civil disobedience of laws when once launched. He added that there was no repression in the Delhi province, because the Congress organisations had been practically sleeping there.

Regarding the general situation, the Swami said that the Non-Co-operation movement had produced wonderful self-consciousness in the nation and had achieved within a year and a half the work of half a century.

Repression had not cowed down the movement. The Bardoli resolution sounded the death-knell of the enthusiasm with which the country was permeated. The Delhi resolution failed to resuscitate the dormant spirit. His opinion was that if mass civil disobedience could not be launched (as appeared to be the general opinion of the leaders in all the provinces) with the condition proposed by him, it was highly advisable to abandon all kinds of civil disobedience to concentrate the whole energy of the Congress organisation upon the constructive programme.

He suggested that if faith in the constructive programme could, somehow, be injected, there would be no necessity of knocking at the doors of the Councils and the movement would become effective, that the Bureaucracy would be driven to bay in no time and a decisive battle fought."

I had almost severed my connection with all active movements of the Congress after my rejoinder to Pandit Nehru had been dispatched at the end of July 1922, but, shortly after, a time came when I again thought of working with the Congress leaders. It was when Devdas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were again convicted. I then felt a call to work and sent in my resignation even from the Presidentship of the All-India representative body of the Arya Samaj and was ready to devote myself heart and soul to the Congress work. But again an eye-opener came in the way of the resignation of Mr. N. C. Kelkar. Giving the reasons of his resignation Mr. Kelkar said that Hakeem Ajmal Khan's view was "that office-bearers should not express their views if they differed from the Congress and either they should give up their

offices or keep quiet. Further it was urged by him that the office-bearers should only be such men as carry out the Congress programme in every detail."

On reading this, after giving details, I wrote to Dr. Ansari—"As I hold the view that (1) individual civil disobedience should be altogether given up, and (2) if we cannot launch Mass Civil Disobedience at once with the ruling that, once launched, it will not be stopped on account of any violence outside the Congress organizations, we should give up the idea of starting Mass Civil Disobedience also, and further as I hold (3) that in order to make our concentration over the constructive programme successful the Congress workers should freely enter the Councils under the Montford Reform scheme; and as there is, in my opinion, an additional reason for Congress workers to enter the Councils—namely, as a reply to the challenge thrown out by the British Premier when he says—"a good deal will depend upon the kind of representatives chosen at the next elections," I think I cannot conscientiously remain in the Executive of the Congress and I revive my resignation from all offices sent on 12th March last.

It was for this reason that I refused to become President of the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee on your tendering your resignation from that office.

This is my last unless the inconceivable happens and the A. I. C. C. at Calcutta decides to start mass civil disobedience simultaneously in all the Provinces when I am pledged to lead the movement in one province, preferably Punjab."

This was my position when I was clapped into jail

by the Amritsar Police. On coming out I learnt all about the doings at Gaya and read the arguments for and against each of the views represented there. I was sorry I could not identify myself with any of the parties because both insisted upon launching civil disobedience when the necessary atmosphere of mass non-violence was established, which I did not believe was possible under the circumstances then existing. I wrote at the time :—

" As regards entry into the Councils, it is meaningless unless you mean to take the fullest advantage of your presence there and do not go there for the pure purpose of obstructing all work. It is objected that entry into the Councils means co-operation with the Bureaucracy. Why not call it co-operation with your own people, by helping them there. But it is futile to talk of entry into the Councils unless the Congress rules it by an overwhelming majority.

To sum up.—Personally I am neither for entry into the Councils nor for persisting in an idle threat of launching civil disobedience. My faith remains unshaken in the potentiality of the constructive programme alone to win Swaraj and I was ready to concentrate my energies on one of its items which appeared to stand in the way of national unity. But that was not to be."

In the course of an article, Pandit Bhagwan Das, M.A., the level-headed sage of Benares, writes :—

" In September 1923 the respected Shri Motilalji came to my house as a guest for a day. On that day I put it to him, in private, as they were ready to enter into the Councils on behalf of the Swarajya party then, without making complete obstruction their aim, why they

should not adopt and preach the policy of Lokmanya Tilak. By doing so several parties, which are separate today, would join forces. Pandit Motilalji replied that he, too, thought so but the public was not prepared to accept the policy. . . . . For several reasons Shri Motilalji did not consider the propriety of this programme and propagated a new policy. But in his heart he believed that further on they should be obliged to adopt the policy of Responsive Co-operation."

This was in September 1923. But months before that, at the end of February, 1923, I believe brother Motilal Nehru came to me at Delhi and asked me to join their party as they had adopted the line chalked out by me, in my statement before the Congress Enquiry Committee. My reply was that I had advised the Congressionists to enter the Councils for working them for what they were worth and not for wrecking and ruining them, as was the avowed policy of the Swarajya party. Brother Motilal's reply was frank and straightforward. He said :—"All this was for catching votes at the Gaya Congress. What we will do in the Assembly and the Councils you will see for yourself." And I have followed the course of the Swarajya party in the Assembly and the Councils and I have found that there is no perceptible difference between the practice of that party and the responsive co-operationists, whatever difference there might be in their professions.

On 13th February 1923, I was called to lead the movement for the reclamation of Malkana Rajputs by their several brotherhoods and later on in the Removal of Untouchability work. I found, to my astonishment,

that while Muhammadan leaders, doing Tabligh work openly, were allowed to guide the policy of the Congress and work as its accredited representatives, those engaged in the work of rescuing the Hindu Samaj from disintegration were tabooed and kept out of the Congress executive.

When Mahatma Gandhi came out of jail and Juhu became a place of pilgrimage for politicians, the father of the non-co-operation movement succumbed to the back-bitings of his Musalman favourites and anti-Hindu chelas professing Hinduism against my humble self and, avoiding all discussions with me personally, launched that tirade against the founder and the members of the Aryasamaj, which have done enough harm not only to the Aryasamaj and the Hindu community but to the Congress itself by alienating the minds of its staunchest servants. The Muslims got their scape-goats in the Aryasamajists and in the Bakr-i-Id of 1924 A.D. a Hindu mandir was desecrated and eight young and old Hindus were killed and scores, among whom were some women, mercilessly stabbed and otherwise wounded. Mahatma Gandhi came to Delhi and wanted both the communities to refer everything to arbitration. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and myself induced the Hindus although they were the aggrieved party, to agree to Mahatma's sole arbitration, but the Muslims prevaricated. Then came the diabolical doings of Muhammadans at Amethi, at Gulbarga and finally at Kohat. The news was confirmed by Mahatma's most trusted chelas by personal enquiry on the spot, whole Urdu newspapers containing heart-rending details of the Kohat atrocities had been kept

back from him by his Muslim host and surroundings. When finally Gandhiji called me and I read out all the details and at the same time exposed the machinations of Muslim Maulanas and leaders against the Aryasamaj by reading from the late Maulana Abdul Bari's pamphlet, Mahatma Gandhi realized the enormity of his unconscious injustice to the Hindus and went on 21 days' fast. The records of the famous Unity Conference of November 1924 are a historical document. It proved absolutely abortive. The very day that Gandhiji broke his fast came news of the recrudescence of riots at Allahabad and Lucknow etc., and the Muslims of Delhi refused to accept Mahatma Gandhi as sole arbitrator. Mahatmaji acknowledged in private that negotiations fell through on account of Muslim refusal but never gave out his opinion to the public. Mahatmaji suddenly left for Calcutta on the arrest of several Congress leaders there, entered into a compromise with Das and Nehru on spinning franchise and got it confirmed at Belgaum by sheer threats to his no-changing followers. I went to Belgaum because I was specially invited by Mahatmaji to show to the world that we were on good terms with each other. I was not invited in the Subjects Committee. Mahatmaji wanted me to join him in opening the Charkha Competition and to attend the open Session at the time of his presidential address (1924 A.D.). I obliged him to the letter in this.

I paid a visit to the Congress Session at Cawnpore, in 1925, as a visitor but I have had nothing to do with its active work since the beginning of 1923.

To conclude. I have all along been an ordinary member of the Congress and have been advising and still

advise every Hindu to join it as a member. Beyond that I have no ambition to go. Whenever my help has been asked I have fully given it to the local office holders. But I find that a few thousand members of the Congress throughout the country, to which number the one crore of members of June 1922 has dwindled, are trying their best not to allow any new members to enter the Congress fold if they are not certain of their supporting blindly the present clique in possession. My experience of the last six years and more has convinced me that it would be more useful to prepare singleminded, honest, God-fearing men for the future work of digesting real Swarajya when gained rather than waste my time after the mirage of so-called Swarajya which even Mahatma Gandhi, (much less other leaders), is not able to define. Before I conclude, I have to appeal to the Congressmen, who will assemble at Gauhati, to amend the Congress constitution so as to make it easy for every Nationalist to enter the Congress for serving the motherland to the best of his ability.

END

AT THE GURUKULA

By Hon. Mr. J. Ramsay Macdonald, M. P.

(Afterwards Prime Minister of England)

EVERYONE, who has read of Indian sedition, has heard of the Gurukula, where the children of the Arya Samaj are educated. It is the most characteristic expression of the spirit and doctrine of the Arya, and round it have gathered all the suspicions attached to this aggressive religious body. It has therefore been frowned upon by Government, reported upon by police officers, and condemned by most Anglo-Indians. I found that by travelling during the night it was just possible for me to visit the school within the space of a week-end, and I sought sleep in a train that proceeds from Delhi to Hardar at the rate which appears to be a mile an hour with frequent long stops between stations.

In the early morning I reached Hardwar, where the Ganges finds its gateway from the mountains to the plain. The station was crowded with pilgrims, some evidently having come from very far on that universal and eternal quest for what is to cleanse the soul from sin. Jungle-clad hills looked down upon us, and we started on foot in air which bit with the snap of an English autumn morning. When the river bank was reached, the view upwards opened out and the nearer hills were seen to be bending humbly at the feet of great snow-clad Himalayan pinnacles which rose over all like the spires of a gigantic

cathedral. Every river ripple, every hill thicket, every snowfield was lit by bright sunshine.

A *tamer*—a slender raft of bamboo rods lashed over airtight kerosine tins—lay on the shingle. Upon it we were launched into the current, and in the twinkling of an eye we were in midstream. Over deep pools we floated leisurely, then the river-bed below suddenly began to race under us, the *tamer* heaved and bumped, the water splashed up, and the slender raft rushed down rapids to find peace in another pool and be again caught in the grips of other eddies and races. Twisting and whirling and splashing, the river hurried its burden along ; monkeys chattered as we passed ; strange things of the jungle peeped out and returned to the shelter of the long grass. On a sandy bay we landed, and a path, so dusty and so hot led us into the jungle. The yellow grass rose far above our heads ; the cool mountain winds refused to follow us ; the sun smote us. At last we came to a long, straight road partly shaded by trees. Far ahead we could see a flag at the end of a tall mast—the Gurukula was in sight.

Munshi Ram

In 1901-02, when Munshi Ram, Pleader at Jalundhar, weary of the world, repelled by the ways and the fortunes of the law, converted from his unbelief and devoted to the religious propaganda of Swami Dayanand, sought peace and work, he came to the jungle near Hardwar to found a school. The Arya Samaj had decided to put Dayanand's views on education into operation. Munshi Ram, having listened to lessons in English being given to his sons, had concluded that the system was all

wrong and had drafted a report on the subject, and the Samaj invited him to be the head of the new institution. He had had no experience, but he had ideas.

Where was the school to be placed? "Away from men," said the devotees. For it was to be no Government college to turn good Indians into poor Englishmen who would uproot their own sacred culture from their hearts and put nothing but weeds in its place. The boy who was to go to the Gurukula was to be taught his own Indian culture, he was to have wisdom brought to him through the medium of the vernacular; Sanskrit was to be the classical language which was to colour his thought; the religion of pure Vedas was to be his atmosphere; the learning and the tongue of the West were to be a subordinate influence. And when school days were over, the boys were to go out into India, learned in the holy books, with religion in their hearts, apostles of Swami Dayanand's teaching. Their living was to be got not from Government service and not from twisting the law, but from callings, like medicine, agriculture and teaching, directly associated with the every day lives of the people. Hence the school had to be off the highroads and away from cities; it had not to be within reach of the sound of the world's strife nor under the shadow of the world's smoke. It was to be partly a public school and partly a monastery. So Munshi Ram sought the jungle. A zemindar, stricken in health and childless, whose wife was devout, made a present of a village. Tigers lay in its lands and in the rains wild elephants came plashing down from the hills. But the Ganges embraced the domain, the gift was accepted, and there Munshi Ram lit his fires.

The Gurukula is approached through kitchen and flower gardens, by paths fragrant with rose and jessamine. Its playing fields lie round it and its dormitories are built in squares at its centre. Over its entrance gate flies the flag bearing the sacred OM, the Eternal of the Vedas. Three hundred boys are now there. They must be between 6 and 10 years of age when they enter, and they stay till they are 25. *They are handed over to the legal guardianship of Munshi Ram, now known by the title of Mahatmaji.* He is their father and they are his sons. At four o'clock they rise from their hard deal beds, do physical exercises and bathe in cold water. Worship follows. In the hottest weather they go bareheaded and barefooted. "They may have a hard life," smiled Mahatmaji, "and we must discipline them to it." A yellow robe is the school badge. Whilst they are at school they see little of their parents, but an annual gathering attended by thousands of people is held in the college grounds and parents go to that. Special huts are put up and the crowd is like an old English fair. During their holidays the boys are taken by their teachers to famous places in India, and in these wanderings they have gone as far as Kashmere.

To the official mind and experience all this is confusing. There are no Englishmen on the staff ; English is not the medium of instruction ; text books on English literature prescribed by the Punjab University, as the basis of Indian higher education are not used here ; no students are sent up for University examina-

tions; the college confers its own degrees. Verily, this is defiance. The first gasp of the surprised official was bound to be "Sedition." But that cannot be the final judgment on the Gurukula. It is the most momentous thing in Indian education that has been done since Macaulay sat down to put his opinions into minute in 1835. Everyone here is unhappy regarding the results of that minute but no one, so far as I have yet seen, save the founders of the Gurukula, has translated his unhappiness into a new experiment.

Impressive Welcome

A tall magnificent figure bearing itself with commanding grace comes to meet us. A painter of the modern school would welcome it as a model for the Christ, one of mediaeval tastes would see in it a form of the Apostle Peter—though a trifle tall and commanding for the fisherman. Mahatmaji bids us welcome and we pass into his simply furnished room dominated by the tinsel symbol Om. In my own room they have covered a table with a pure white cloth and have placed upon it two brass vases full of red flowers joined by a heap of bright coloured petals. No guest has ever had a sweeter chamber. A servant pours water on our hands, and gives us a towel, and leaving our shoes outside we pass into a room where food is served. We bow our heads whilst Mahatmaji says grace. I have heard many graces, but none like this. Our host's rich sonorous voice lingering long over the Sanskrit vowels, makes the perfect music of penitential thanksgiving.

When the meal is over, we go round the school. All

is order and happiness. Little things with bright, sparkling eyes, older ones with sedate faces, fill the class rooms, making their models of clay, repeating their lessons together, chanting their verses, listening to their teachers—for the lecture is largely employed at the Gurukula. Classes ended, there is a hearty rush to the playing grounds, each pupil as he passes the Master bowing at his feet and with an upward sweep of his joined hands doing him reverence.

In the cool of the afternoon we walk out into the jungle, Mahatmaji telling us as he goes what is heard. The clothing, the grouping, the pose, the long staff, curiously recall the pictures of walks in Galilee which we used to look at on Sundays in our young days—I alone, in my English dress, being an incongruous speck in the tableau and its setting. The West blazes into the glory of sunset, the half moon already high overhead pales into a silvery brightness. The long grasses become silent as the night air becomes still, the rustling of restless things is heard with sharp clearness, chilliness settles down upon us. The Gurukula is in darkness. But the blaze of fire comes from the dormitory doors in the centre. Chanting voices fill the quadrangles. On mats on the grass squat little white figures sitting like Buddha images. They neither move nor take notice of us. They have finished their communal worship and are now alone in silent contemplation.

Within, the house-masters band by a fire blazing in a hole dug in the centre of the door, and round them, with the fire in the midst, sit their pupils. They are performing the Agnihotra, one of the most ancient Vedic

ceremonies. In the light of the gleam we see the master dip a spoon into a bowl in front of him and throw something upon the fire. Up leaps the blaze and the little voices chant in unison "We offer to God, omniscient, the Giver of Knowledge, the Light of lights." Then there is a pause and the fire goes down. Another offering is sprinkled upon it and it flares again filling the long room with a yellow glare and making grotesque shadows dance on the walls and ceiling. And again the little voices chant: "Oh God, we offer to thee who are all in all." So on through pause and gleam and chant until the ceremony is over and the fire dies down, and the stars alone give light in the courts of the Gurukula.

Again we hold out our hands whilst a servant pours water upon them, and shoeless we squat on mats to eat our evening meal in the open air. The Ganges is rushing past at our feet making a soothing murmur amongst the shingle. The fluffy plumes of the tall grasses catch up the moonlight, and the jungle glistens as though it were laden with dew. Eerie sounds wandering from far off in the wild make me think of ghosts and lost souls. As in a dream I hear someone saying: "All we want is to be allowed to worship God in peace; is that sedition?"

The Daily Chronicle, London.

[Note :—Mr. Ramsay Macdonald was in India as a member of the Islington Commission during 1913-14].

ONE OF OUR HEROES

By C. F. Andrews

A wish expressed by Swami Shraddhananda, whom I have held in reverence for over twenty years, is a sacred thing to me and though I am at the present time recovering from an illness by blood-poisoning, which at one time was very dangerous indeed, I cannot refrain from sitting at my desk and writing a special article for the 'Tej'. Mr. and Mrs. Stokes and Mr. Gregg and Mr. Sundaram were most kind to me through my illness, and I was able at last to get back to Simla, where I saw the Viceroy for the third time on South African affairs and then I came back to my own dear home at Santiniketan Asram, where I have been resting ever since. It was there, that the letter came from Swami Shraddhananda asking me, if not too tired, to write this article.

It is, so I understand, a special number in memory and reverence of Sri Krishna. For that reason, I would begin by saying clearly that never before have I understood so clearly and followed so closely the words of Gita concerning *Nishkama Karma*, which my own dearest English friend Willie Pearson made a motto for us both on our first journey together in 1913 to South Africa when we met Gandhiji for the first time. He used to repeat to me in hours of despondency those wonderful words "look ever to the work, not to the fruit." We had to

leave all results in God's hands and only to struggle to fulfil the divine will in the work itself.

Willie Pearson, my friend and Swamiji's friend also, was tragically killed in a railway accident in Italy nearly four years ago and the blank in my own life has never been filled up. How I missed him this time as I journeyed over once more for the third voyage to South Africa hardly anyone can imagine. Perhaps Swamiji himself and a very few others understand.

We had both been often to the Gurukula, when it was at Kangri, now Hardwar, and Mahatma Munshi Ram (as he was then called) was one of our heroes. We would often speak of him together on that first voyage to South Africa and remember those extraordinarily happy days we had with Mahatma Munshi Ram and Professor Ram Dev and Dr. Sukhdewa and the Brahmacharis of the Gurukula, including more than one who have since gone out to Africa themselves.

I have said that Mahatma Munshi Ram was one of our heroes. Our Gurudeva, the Poet, Rabindranath Tagore, was all in all to us both, for he had inspired us with a love of India, the mother, which his own poetic nature had made real and living to us as we had never known Mother India before. One more, Principal Rudra of St. Stephen's College Delhi, we both loved intensely. He was the truest patriot and a saintly character whom Hindus and Musalmans in Delhi alike respected.

I have often told the story how I first met brother Gandhiji in South Africa and how I was regarded with horror by my fellow countrymen because I had made 'pranam' to him when I first met him by touching his

feet. It was wonderful how simply both Willie Pearson and I came to be friends, intimate and dear friends, with all the Indians out there. They gave us their own friendship without any reserve. It was to both of us a time of very great joy.

When we had got to know Gandhiji very well indeed, he used to laugh at me in his own beautiful way, with love smiling in his face, because, he said, it was quite easy to see the trinity I worshipped, namely Mahatma Munshi Ram, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore and Principal Susil Kumar Rudra. He told me that I had made all three of them living personalities to him and that it had become his wish to know each one of them. After that he used very often to speak of this 'trinity' and it was always a pleasure to me to speak about these three saints and heroes of mine whom I loved with all my heart.

I have two requests to make in concluding this article. The former request is that the English article, which I have written and which will be translated, may be published in the 'Liberator.'* I would like as far as possible *all* my articles to be published in both papers. My second request is that when I go back to South Africa and send letters or articles to my dear friend and brother Swami Shraddhananda, they may be translated and published in the 'Tej' as well as in the 'Liberator'.

* This was published in the *Liberator* on 16-9-1926. The *Tej* is a daily Urdu paper founded by Swami Shraddhananda.

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